



STORY: ISUINA HASEKURA

ART: KEITO KOUME

CHARACTER DESIGN:

JYUU AYAKURA

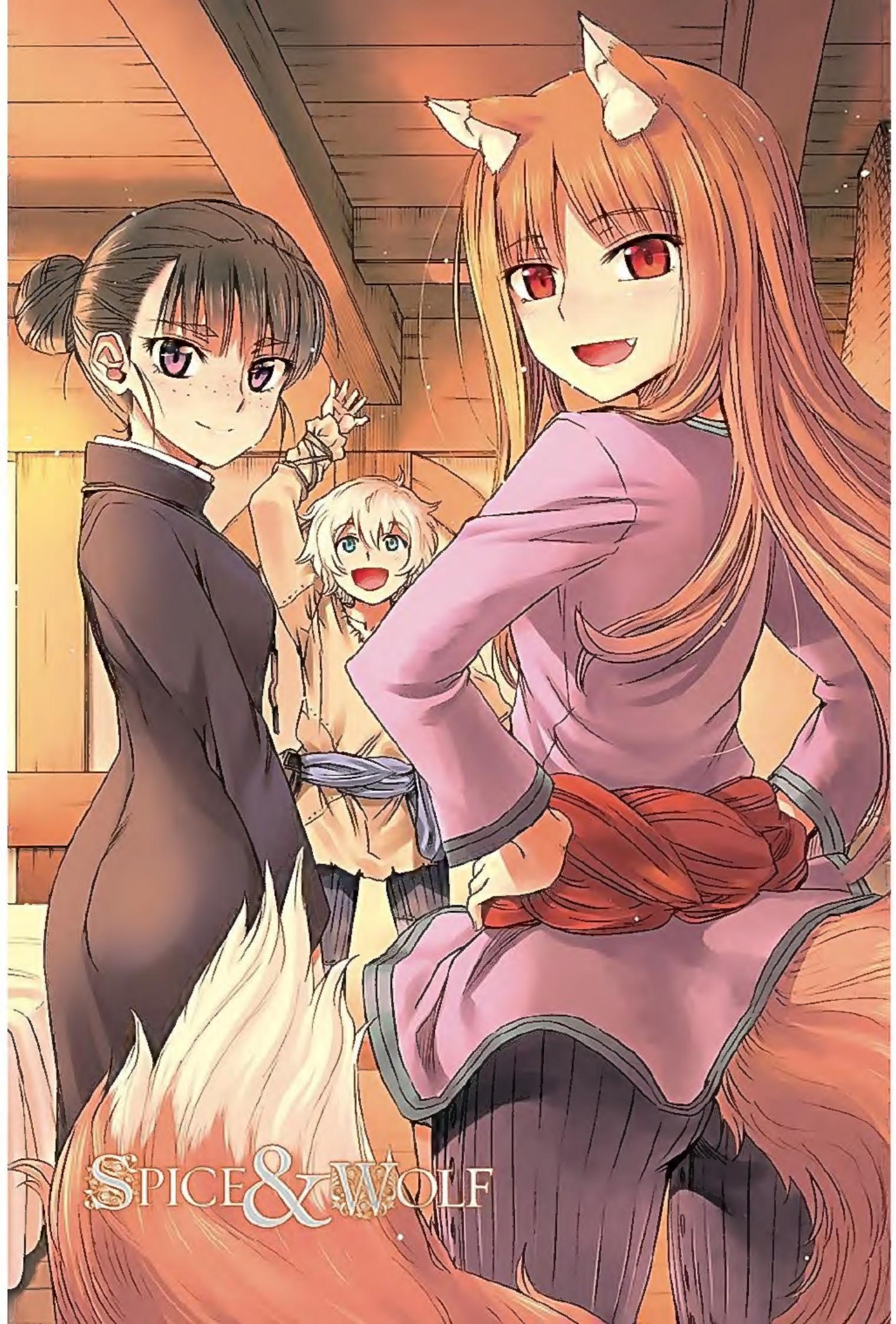
SPICE & WOLF

VOL. 12

PARENTAL ADVISORY

WARNING

EXPLICIT CONTENT



SPICE & WOLF

SPICE & WOLF

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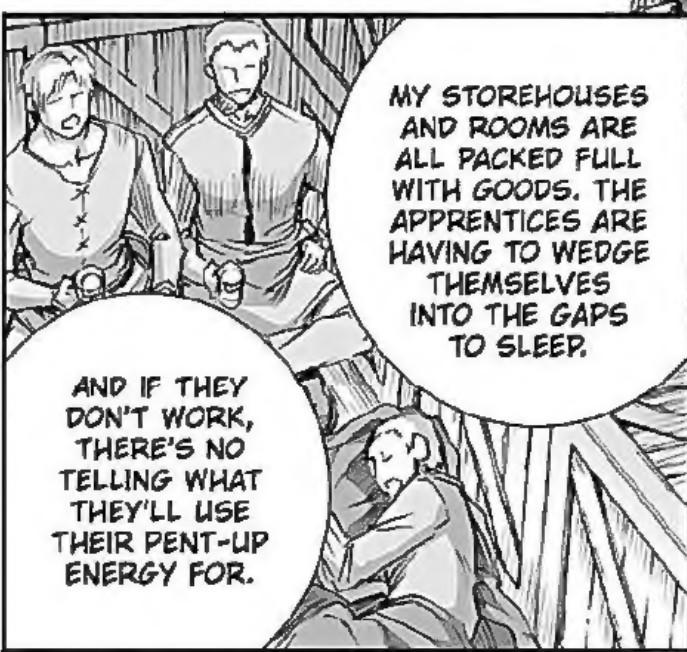
SPICE & WOLF

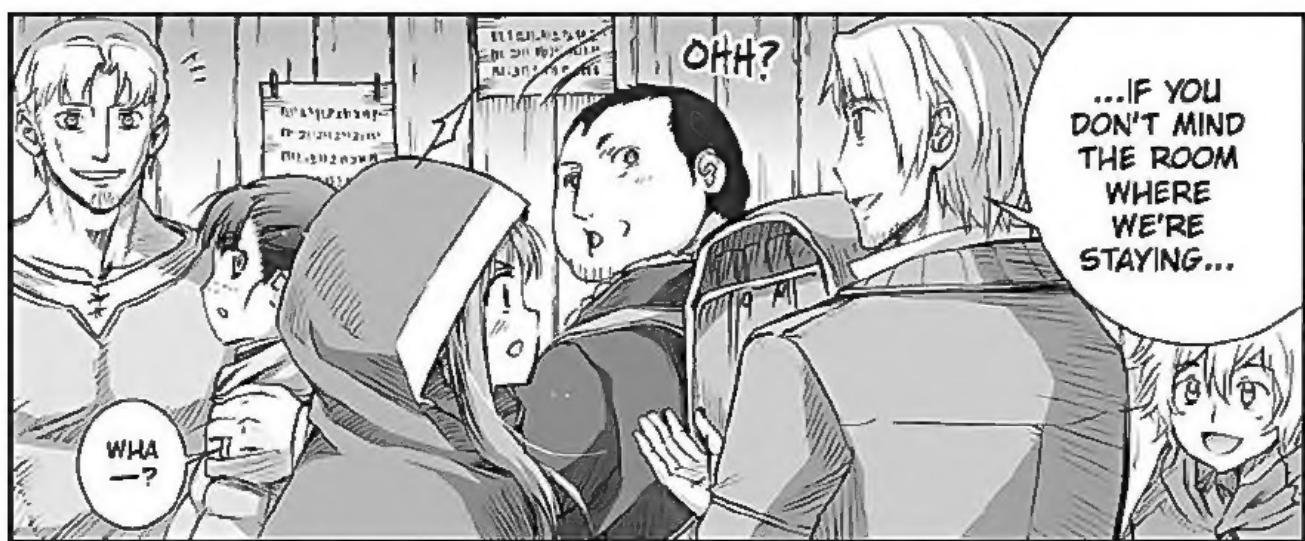
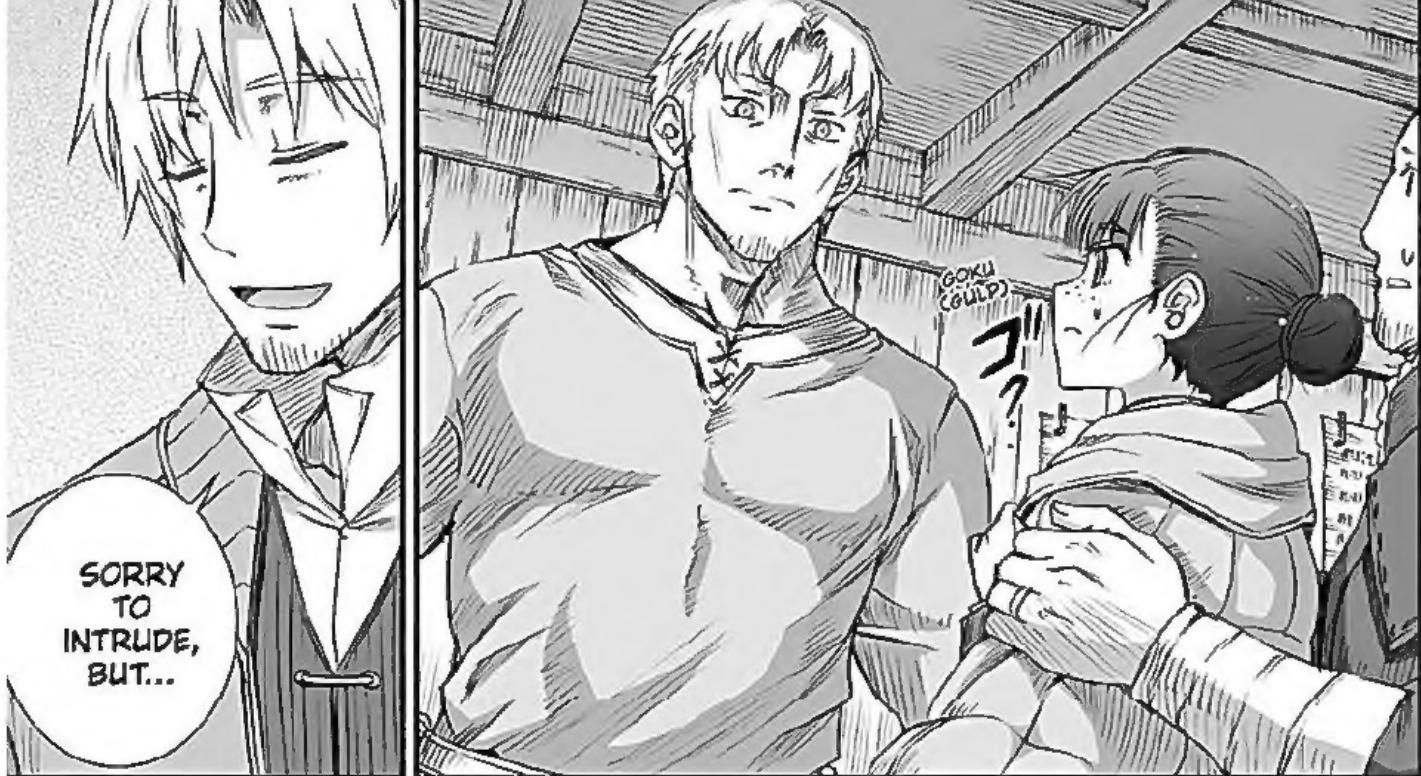
IT'S BEEN
A WHILE,
MISS ELSA.



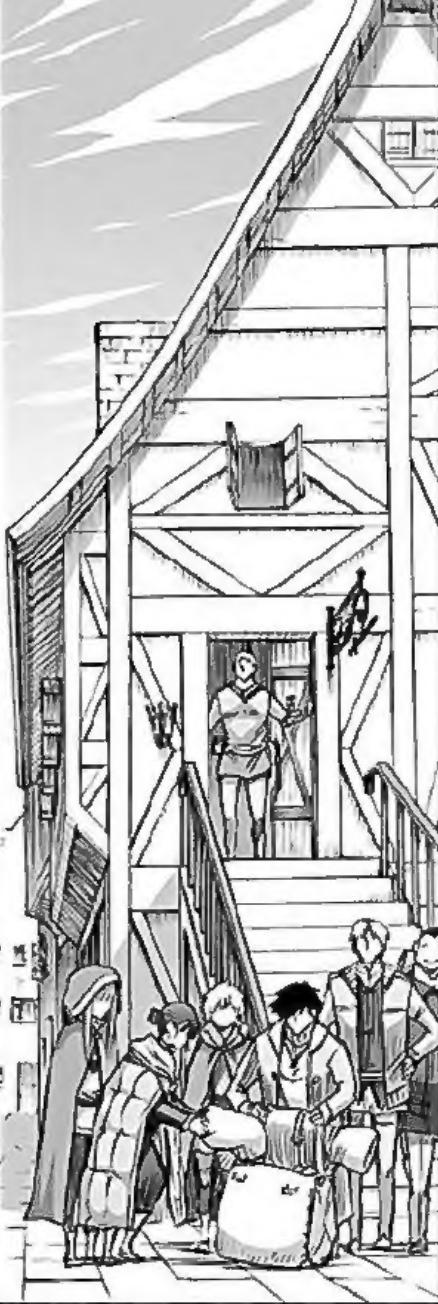








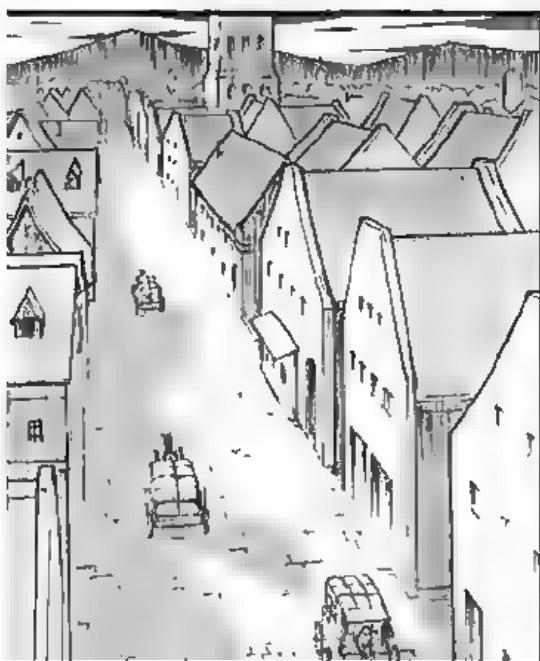
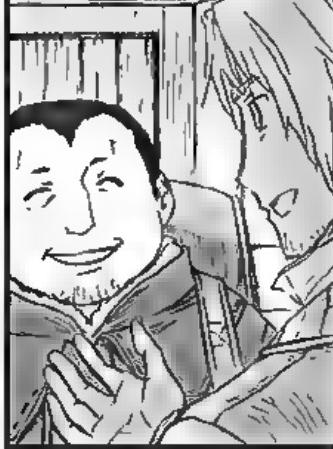


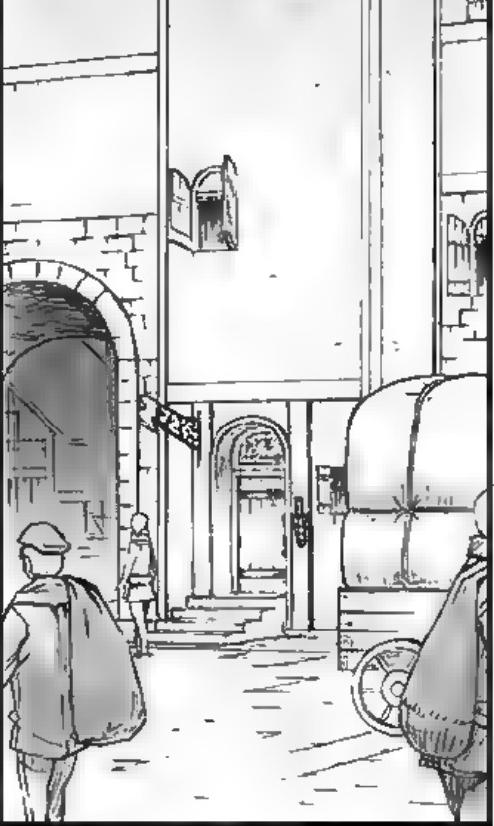






Y-YES!
VERY MUCH
SO! SINCE
I'M TRYING
TO SELL
BIBLES TO
MERCENARIES!





I'M
LOOKING
FOR
SOMEONE.

THE
REASON I
LEFT THE
VILLAGE?

YES.
TO BE
HONEST,
I JUST
CAN'T
FIGURE
IT OUT.

I'M
SEARCHING
FOR A MAN
OF THE CLOTH
TO TAKE OVER
DUTIES AT MY
CHURCH.

...THANKS
TO YOU,
THE FLAME
OF FAITH
HAS BEEN
REKINDLED
IN TERO.

MOREOVER,
YOUR
INCREDIBLE
POWER
DESTROYED
ENBERCH'S
SCHEMES.

BUT...



FOR SUCH A
TASK, I CAN
HARDLY SEND
MERE LETTERS
OUT HITHER
AND YON.

OF COURSE.
MY FATHER,
FATHER FRANZ,
LEFT THE CHURCH
IN MY CARE. I
MUST FIND AN
INDIVIDUAL
WORTHY OF
THAT TRUST.

YOU NEED
TO FIND
SOMEONE
WHOLL
MEASURE
UP TO YOU,
THEN?

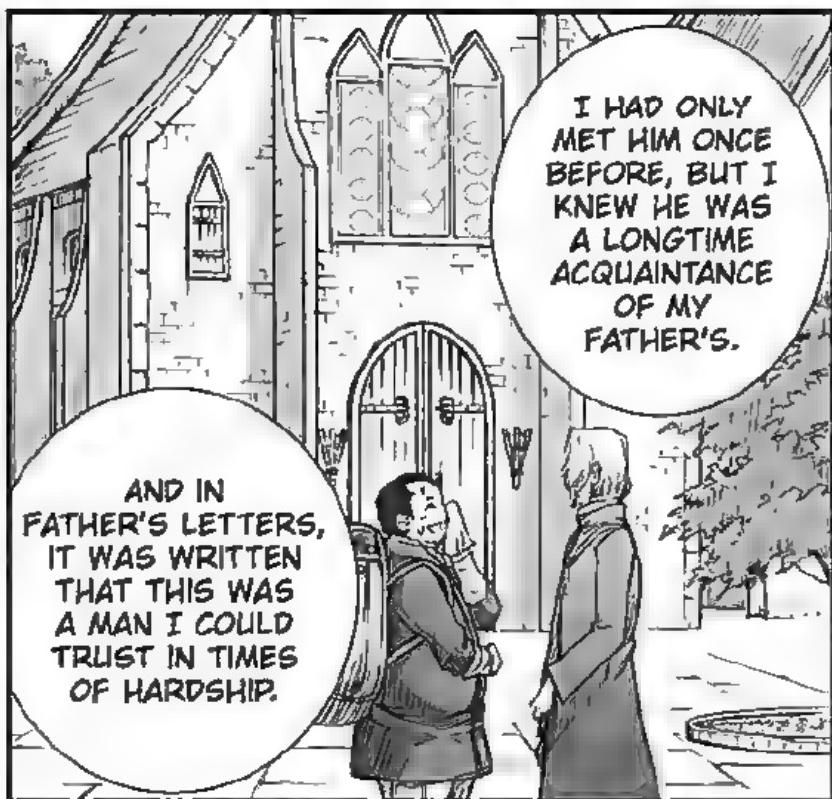
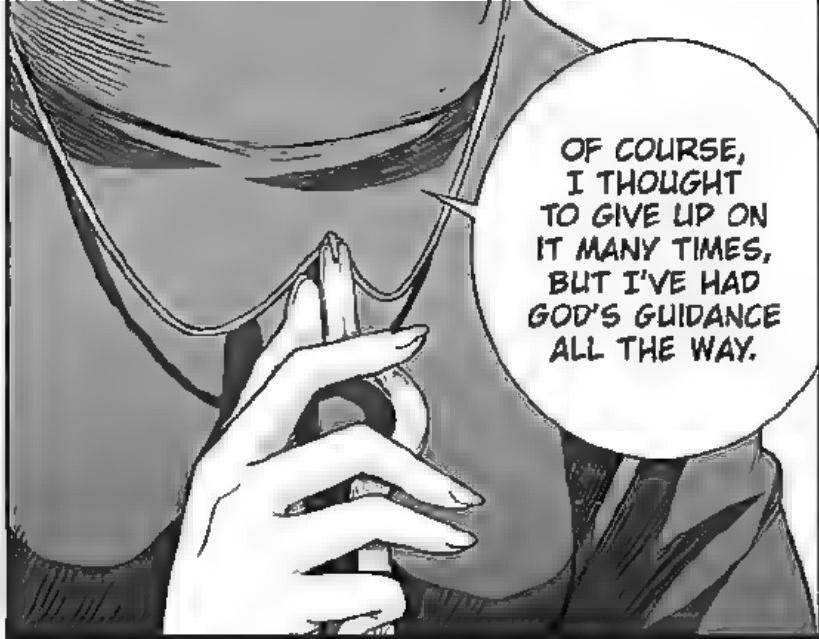
HUH. THAT'S
A RATHER
GOOD IDEA.

I WANT
TO MEET HIM
AND GET A
RECOMMENDATION
FOR WHO
MIGHT TAKE
THE POSITION
IN HIS PLACE.

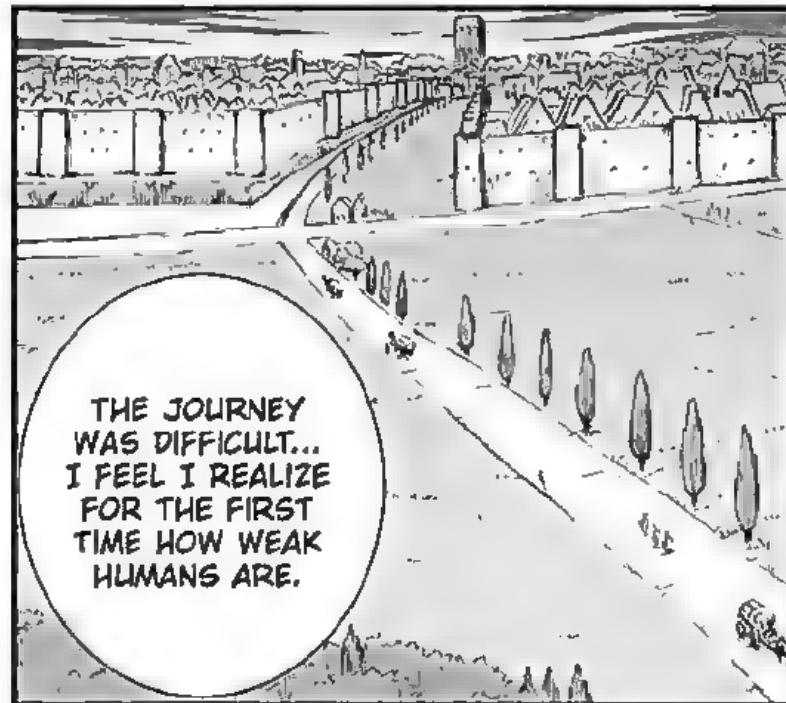
...I WAS
TURNED
DOWN BY
SOMEONE IN
THE LETTER
OF RECOM-
MENDATION
TO MY
FATHER.

SKIPPING
SOME
MINOR
DETAILS...



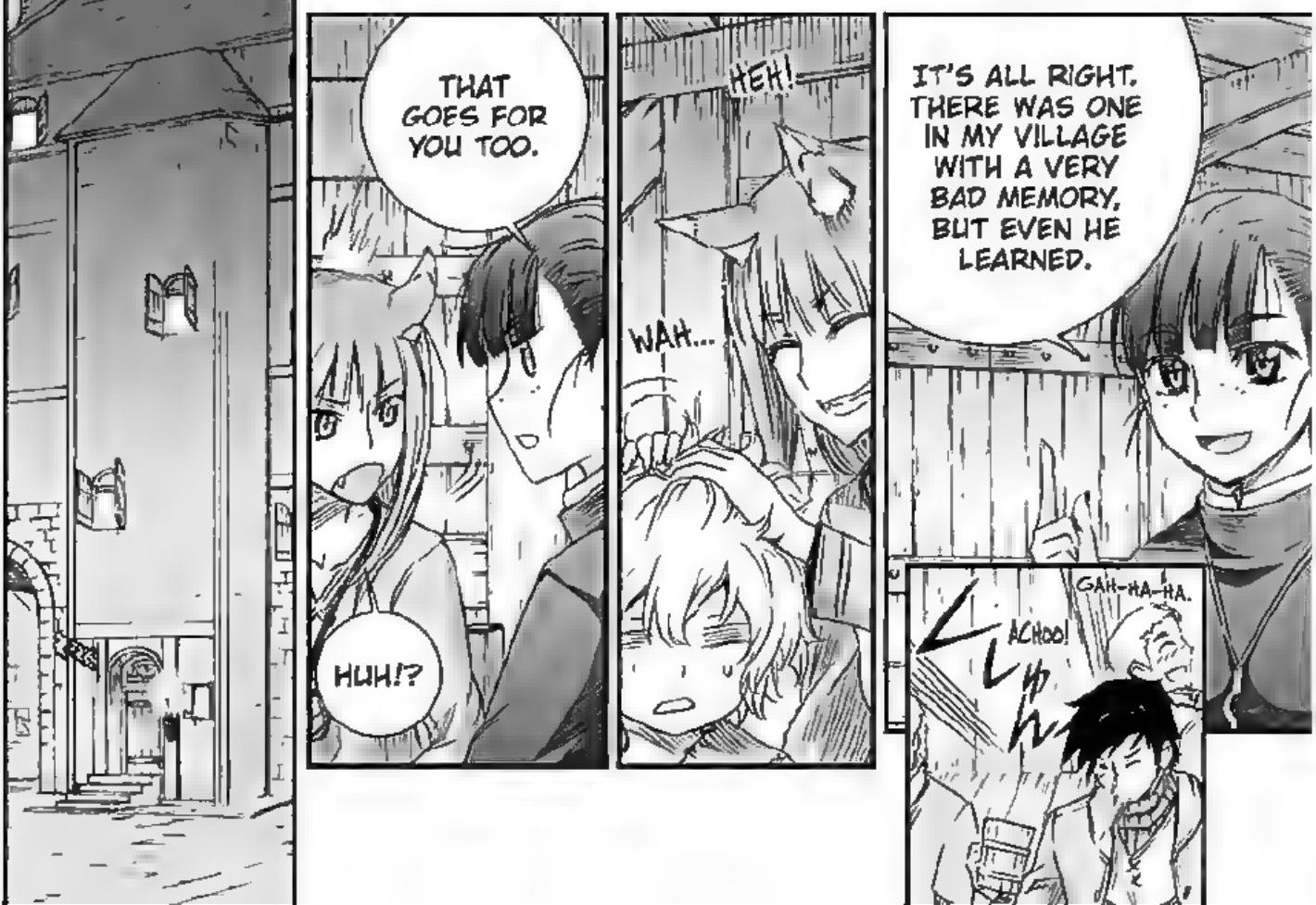


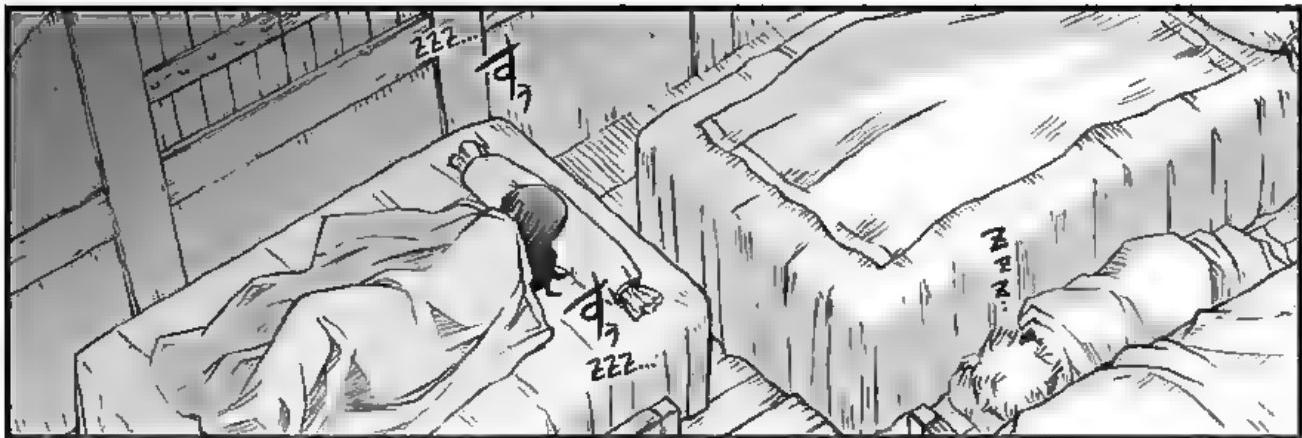


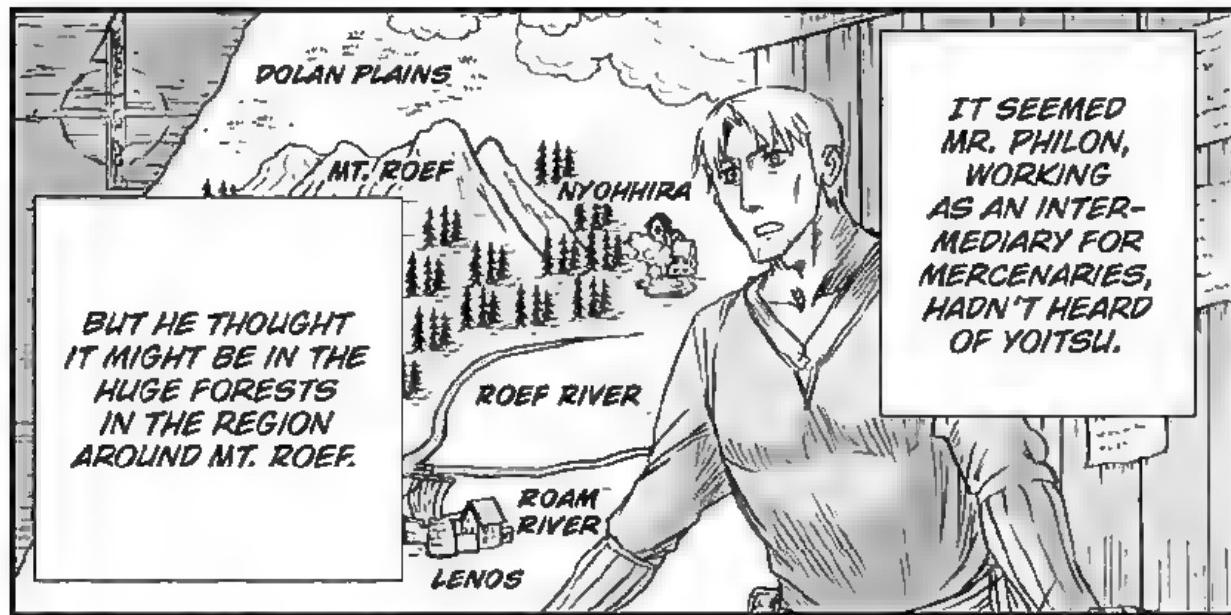


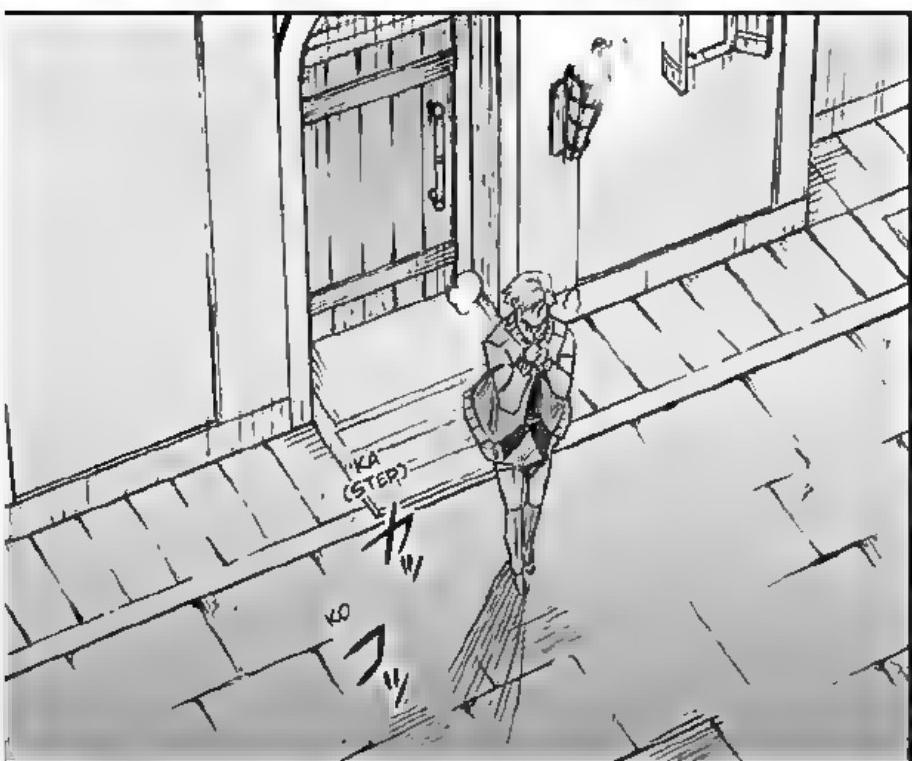


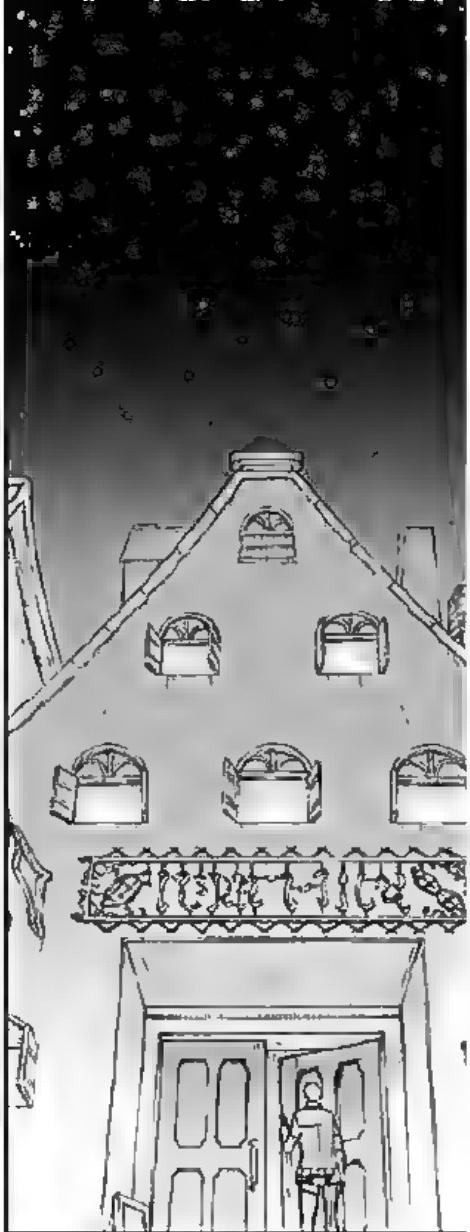


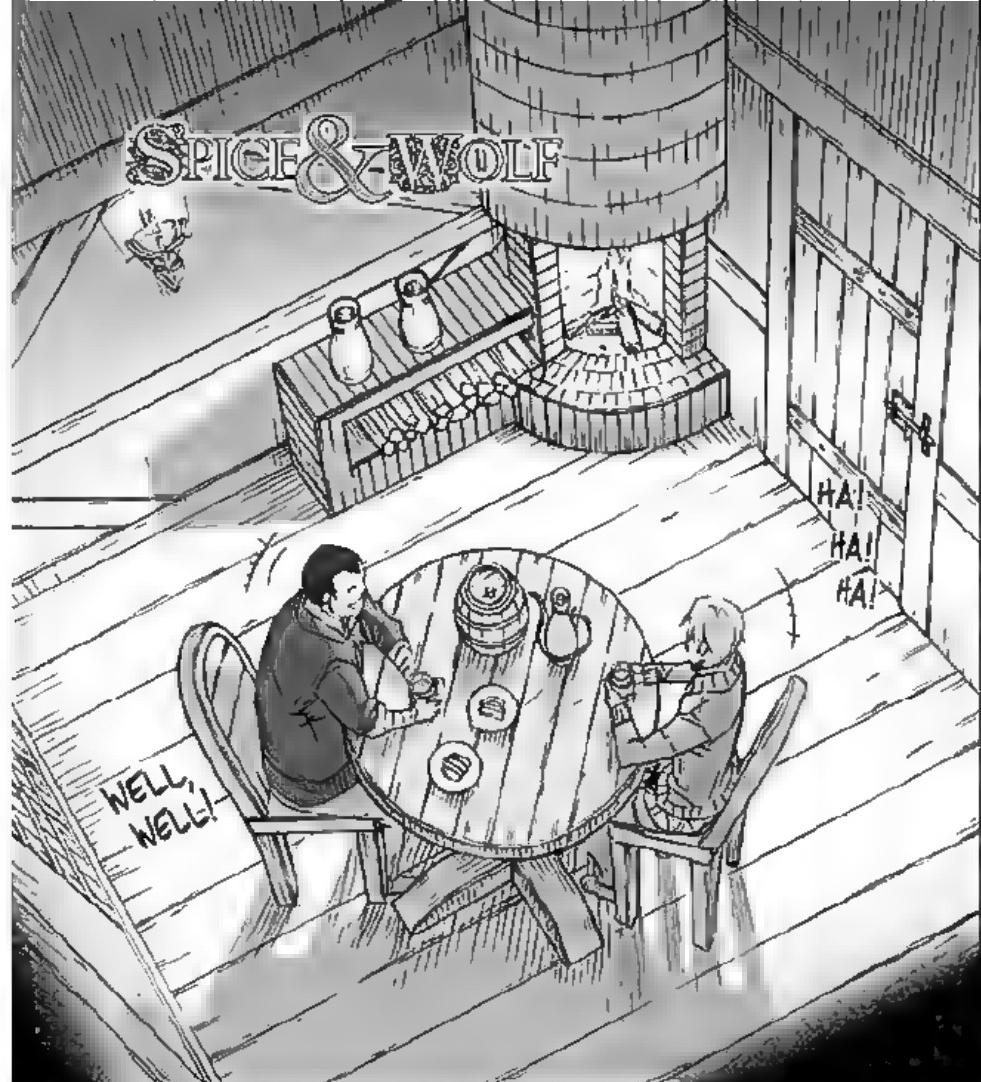














YOU
DIDN'T LOOK
LIKE THE KIND
OF MERCHANT
TO CHASE SUCH
TALES, MR.
LAWRENCE.

PACHI
110
F
PACHI (SNAP)
110
F

...BUT
DOESN'T
SEEM TO
HAVE PUT
OUT A
REWARD.

THE DEBAU
COMPANY, WHICH
RUNS THE
MINING TOWNS
OF THE NORTH,
SPREAD ITS
NET AROUND
KERUBE...

I'VE
HEARD OF
THE RUMORS
OF A BOOK
THAT WAS A
HOT TOPIC
IN KERUBE
FOR A TIME.

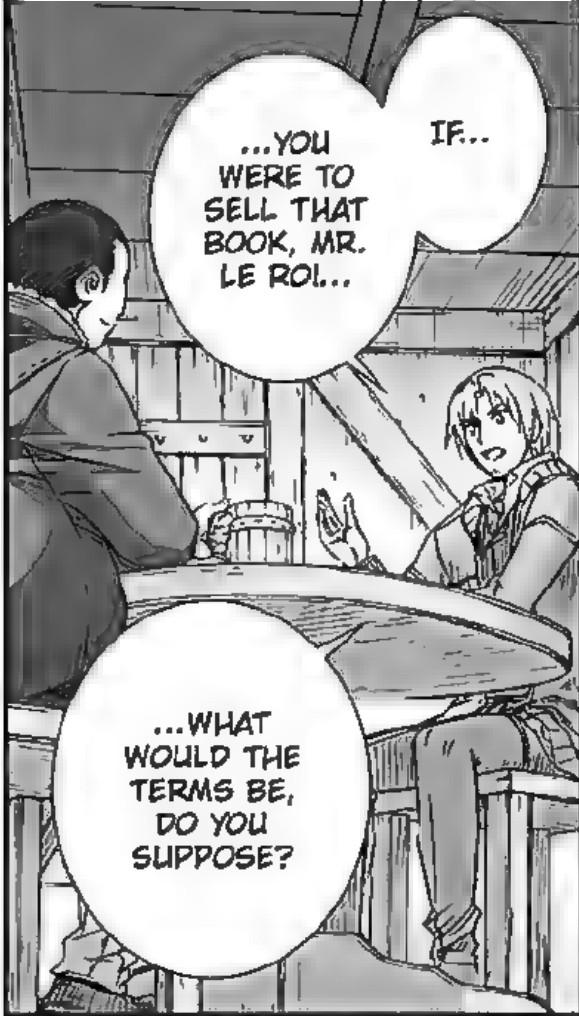
I HAVE...
STRONG
FEELINGS
TOWARD
THE
NORTH.

I HAVE A
PERSONAL
STAKE IN
THIS.

ARE YOU
FROM THE
NORTH
YOURSELF?

SOME PEOPLE
DON'T WANT
UNLIMITED
MINING
DEVELOPMENT.

IF NOTHING
ELSE, I WANT
TO KEEP IT
OUT OF
THE DEBAU
COMPANY'S
HANDS.







SO THE FACT
BOOKSELLERS
WANT THIS ONE SO
BADLY IS PROOF
ITS VALUE IS
SO HIGH.



MR.
LE ROI...

...YOU
KNOW
WHERE
THE TEXT
IS, DON'T
YOU?









COULD YOU AT LEAST SELL ME INFORMATION ON THE BOOK?



MR. LE ROI, LET ME ASK YOU DIRECTLY.



MM...

I SEE... I SEE.



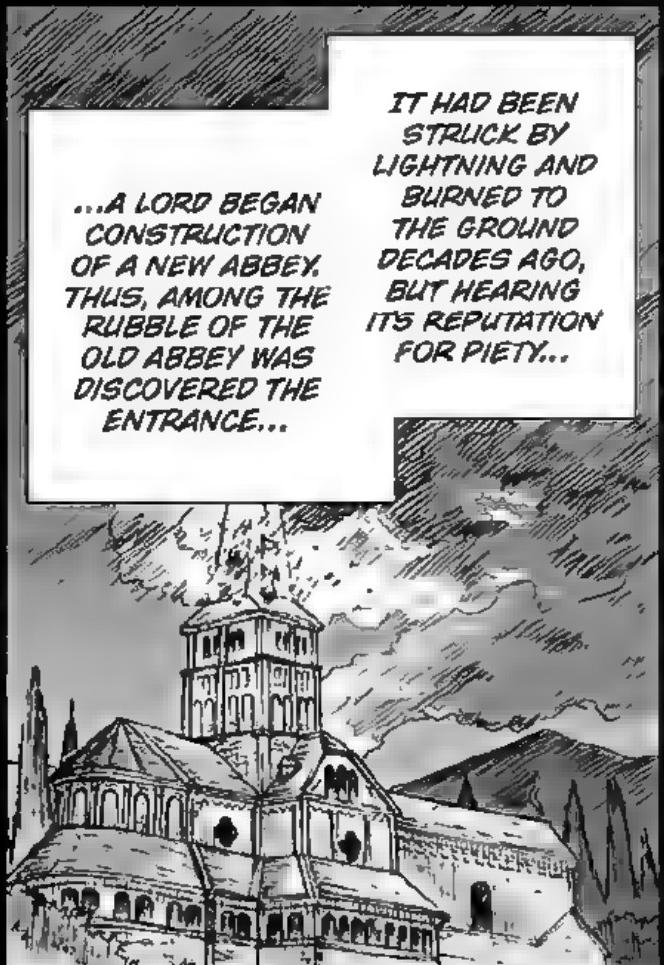
BEYOND THAT, YOU MUST PRODUCE SOMETHING OF EQUIVALENT VALUE.



UNDERSTOOD. I'LL REVEAL A BIT OF INFO AND CONDITIONS.



OF COURSE, I DO NOT KNOW THE EXACT LOCATION.





BUT EVEN THEN, A FEW REMAINED MYSTERIES, MOST OF WHICH WERE WRITTEN IN LANGUAGES OF FAR-OFF DESERT KINGDOMS OR SIMPLY TOO OLD.

MOST OF THEM WERE WRITTEN IN ANCIENT LANGUAGES. SCHOLARS WERE CALLED IN FROM FAR AND WIDE AND ASKED FOR THEIR APPRAISAL.



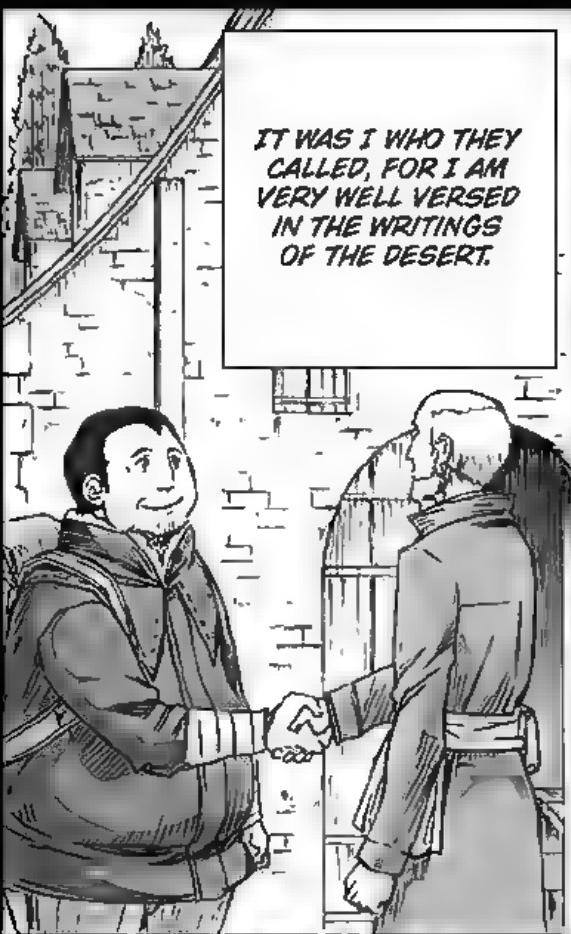
WHILE THE REPRESENTATIVE COULD NOT READ THEM, HE STILL COPIED THE TITLES DOWN AS BEST HE COULD TO CREATE AN INDEX.



DECIPHERING THEM REQUIRED EXTREME EFFORT, AND IF IT TURNED OUT THE BOOKS CONTAINED SOMETHING TERRIBLE, THE ABBEY'S REPUTATION WOULD PLUMMET...



WHETHER MOVED BY SUCH TALK OR NOT, THE LORD SOLD THE VOLUMES TO BOOK COLLECTORS TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION.



IT WAS I WHO THEY CALLED, FOR I AM VERY WELL VERSED IN THE WRITINGS OF THE DESERT.



SOME YEARS LATER, A CERTAIN COMPANY TOOK SOME OF HIS TREASURES AS COLLATERAL FOR A LOAN.



SEEING THE TITLES OF BOOKS I KNEW TO BE FORBIDDEN, I BOUGHT THE INDEX ON THE SPOT AND CAST MY NET FAR AND WIDE.



SCHOLARS HAD TO INVESTIGATE EVERY SINGLE LINE AND WORD, BUT I ONLY NEEDED THE TITLE AND A BRIEF SUMMARY.

...NO ONE COULD
READ, CALLED
CALAMITOUS
MERELY FOR
BEING WRITTEN,
LET ALONE
SURVIVING...

AND THEN
ONE OF THE
VOLUMES
WAS CAUGHT.
A BOOK OF
FORBIDDEN
TECHNIQUES
THAT...

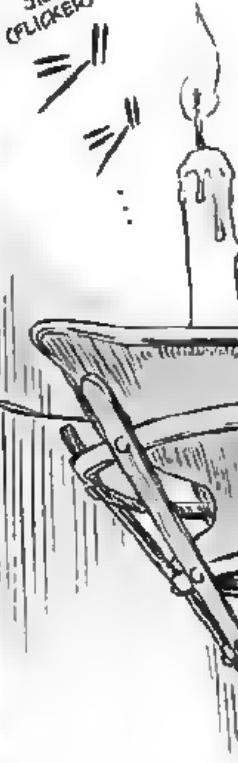


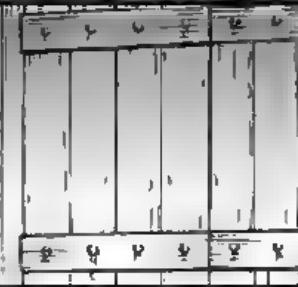
SO
YOU CAN'T
APPROACH
UNTIL YOU'RE
COMPLETELY
PREPARED TO
BUY IT...

TO BE BLUNT,
I CAN ONLY PRAY
THE COMPANY
IT ENDED UP
AT DOES NOT
REALIZE ITS
VALUE.

IF I
CONTACTED
THEM TOO
EAGERLY
THEY'D KNOW
SOMETHING
WAS UP.

CLICKED





IN EXCHANGE FOR GIVING FORBIDDEN INFORMATION TO A MAN TRUSTED BY THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE OF BOLAN...





IF I GET INVOLVED,
I'LL HAVE TO GO WITH LE ROI FOR HIS BOOK DEAL.

...I SEE...

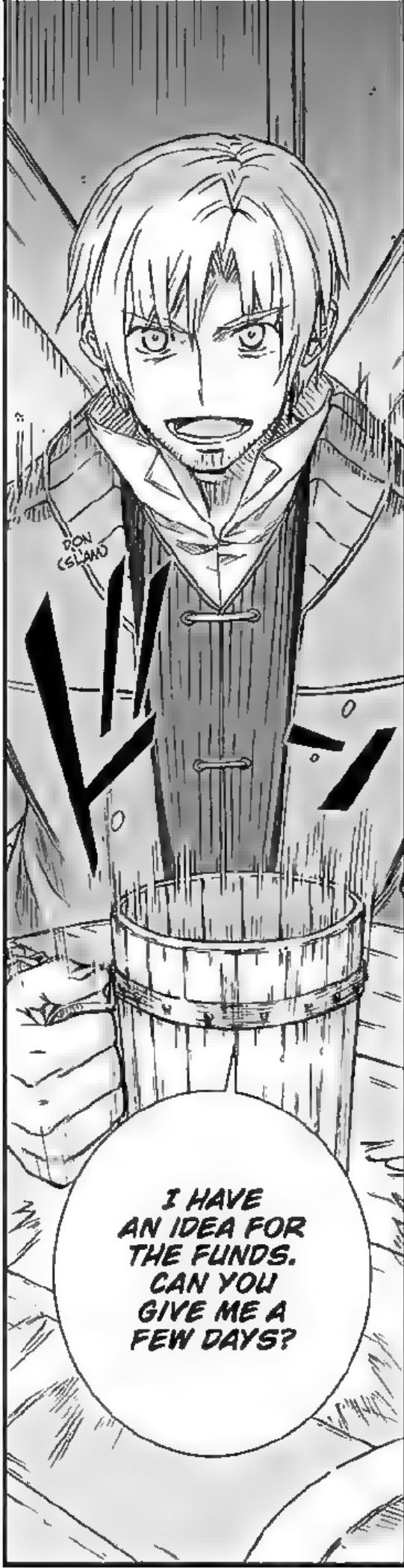
IF IT COMES TO THAT, IT'LL TAKE A LOT OF TIME TO FIX...

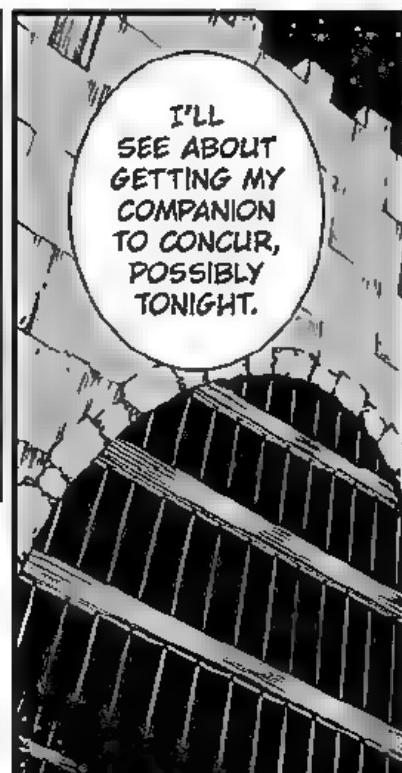
HE MIGHT JUST TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN.

EVEN HOLO WOULD THINK THAT'S UNREASONABLE.

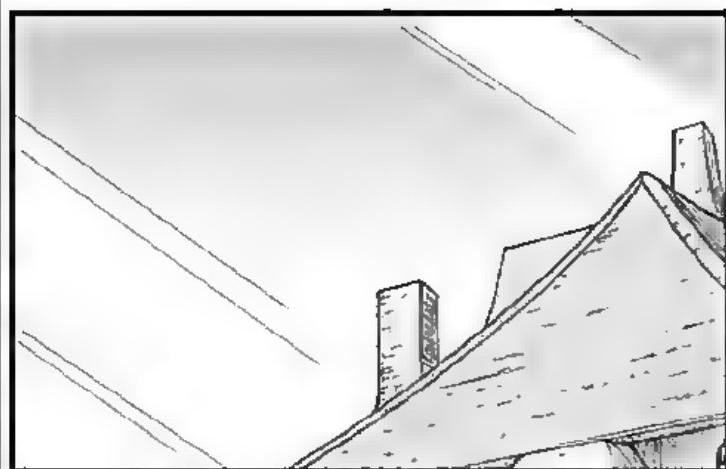
...NOT ELIMINATE EVERYTHING THAT MIGHT POSSIBLY THREATEN HER HOMELAND.

MY PROMISE TO HOLO WAS TO BRING HER TO YOITSU...

















YOU
MEAN...

GATA
(CATTLE)



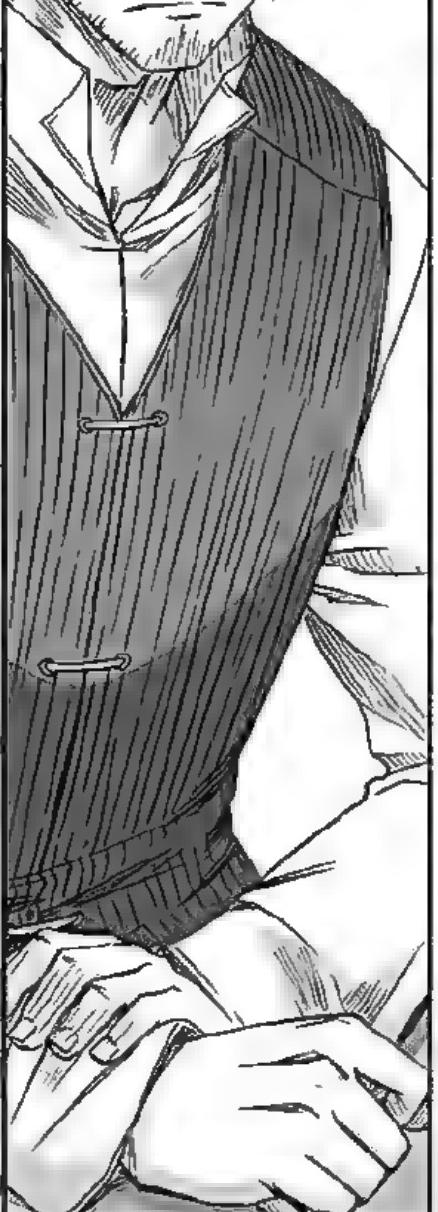
WE
HAVE NO
CHOICE
BUT TO
TAKE THE
FRUITFUL
PATH.







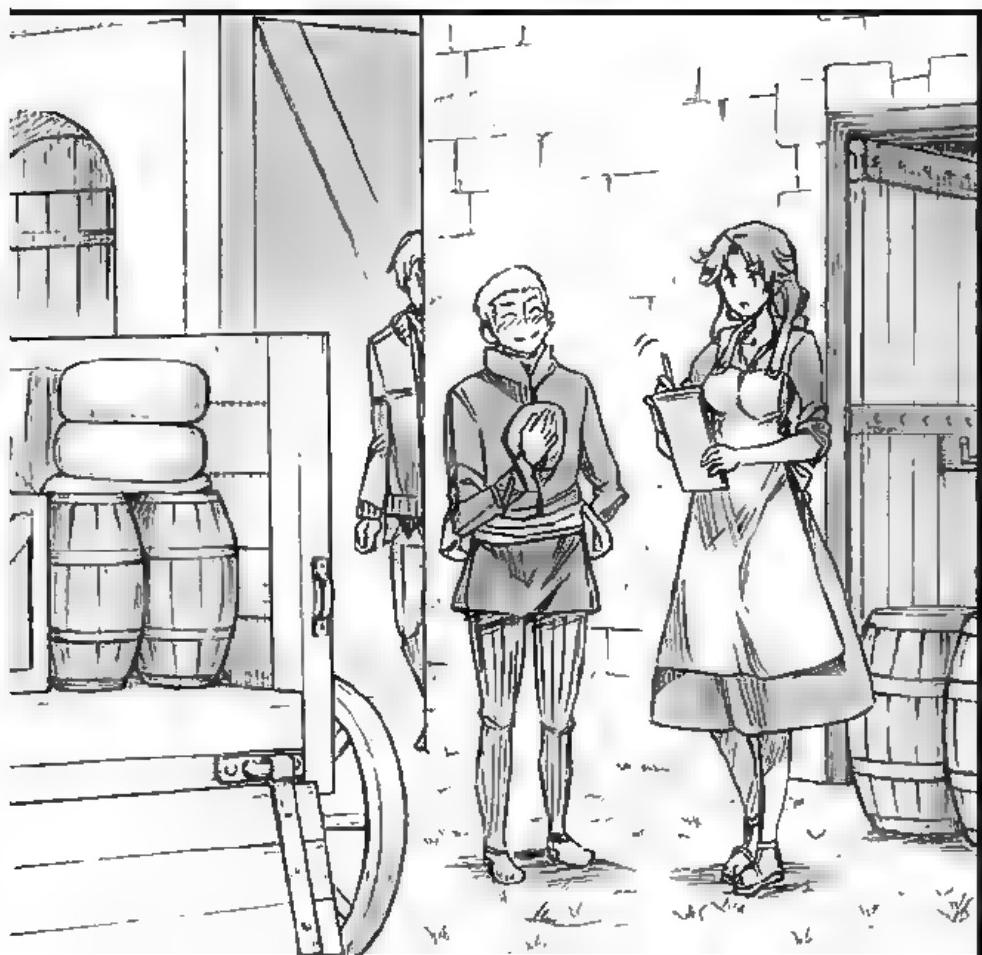














HEY,
YOU! YOU
TRYING
TO MAKE
ME DO
INVENTORY
BY MYSELF
!?

WHY NOT
GO TO THE
MARKETPLACE?
I'M A LITTLE
BUSY HERE.

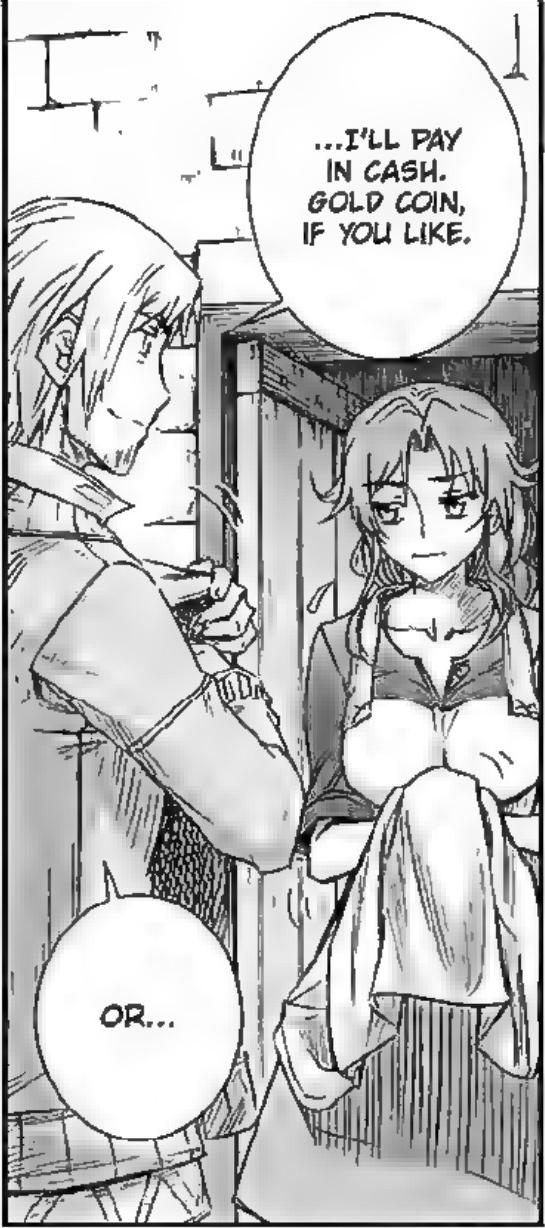


IF TAVERNS
START SELLING
GOODS, THE
TOWN WOULD
BE IN CHAOS.



...IF YOU'RE
PLANNING TO
USE ALL OF
THIS IN YOUR
COOKING.
CLEARLY
SO...







BUT AN OUTRIGHT BAN WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT FOR THE CITY... WORST CASE, THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN VIOLENT REBELLION BY FOREIGN TRADERS.



FURS WERE MUCH MORE PROFITABLE TO SELL AFTER BEING PROCESSED AND TURNED INTO CLOTHING, SO THE CRAFTSMEN HAD NO DESIRE TO SELL TO OUTSIDE TRADERS.



THERE WAS NO OUTRIGHT BAN ON SALES. THEY THOUGHT THIS SOLVED EVERYTHING, BUT THE CHURCH'S OTHER CONDITION WAS PROBLEMATIC.

SO, USING THE CHURCH, THEY REQUIRED THAT ALL BUSINESS BE CONDUCTED IN CASH, SINCE NO ONE CARRIED LARGE AMOUNTS OF COIN LONG DISTANCE.



AND THIS DID THEY LOAN A LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY TO THE FOREIGN MERCHANTS.

THE CHURCH'S COFFERS WERE ALWAYS FULL OF MONEY. THEY SOUGHT SOMEONE THROUGH WHOM THEY COULD LEND TO THE OUTSIDE.



AND SUCH DISPUTES ALWAYS LEAVE THEIR CLAW MARKS BEHIND.

THE FURS WERE BOUGHT UP BY THE FOREIGN MERCHANTS, AND THE ENRAGED CRAFTSMEN RIOTED.

EVEN IF YOU ALLOW THAT MANY TRADES HAPPEN ON CREDIT, YOU STILL NEED SMALL COINS. WE'RE IN REAL TROUBLE.

THERE'S NO MONEY ANYWHERE YOU GO. IT VANISHED LIKE SMOKE.

SINCE THE RIOT, IT'S LIKE THE MONEY'S DRIED UP FROM THE TOWN.

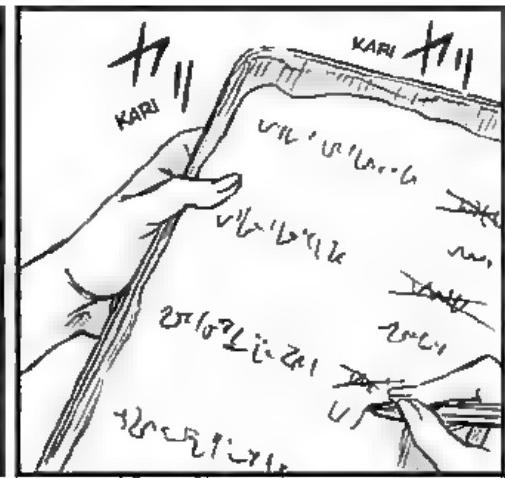
THEY SAY ANYTHING SCARCE BECOMES DEAR.

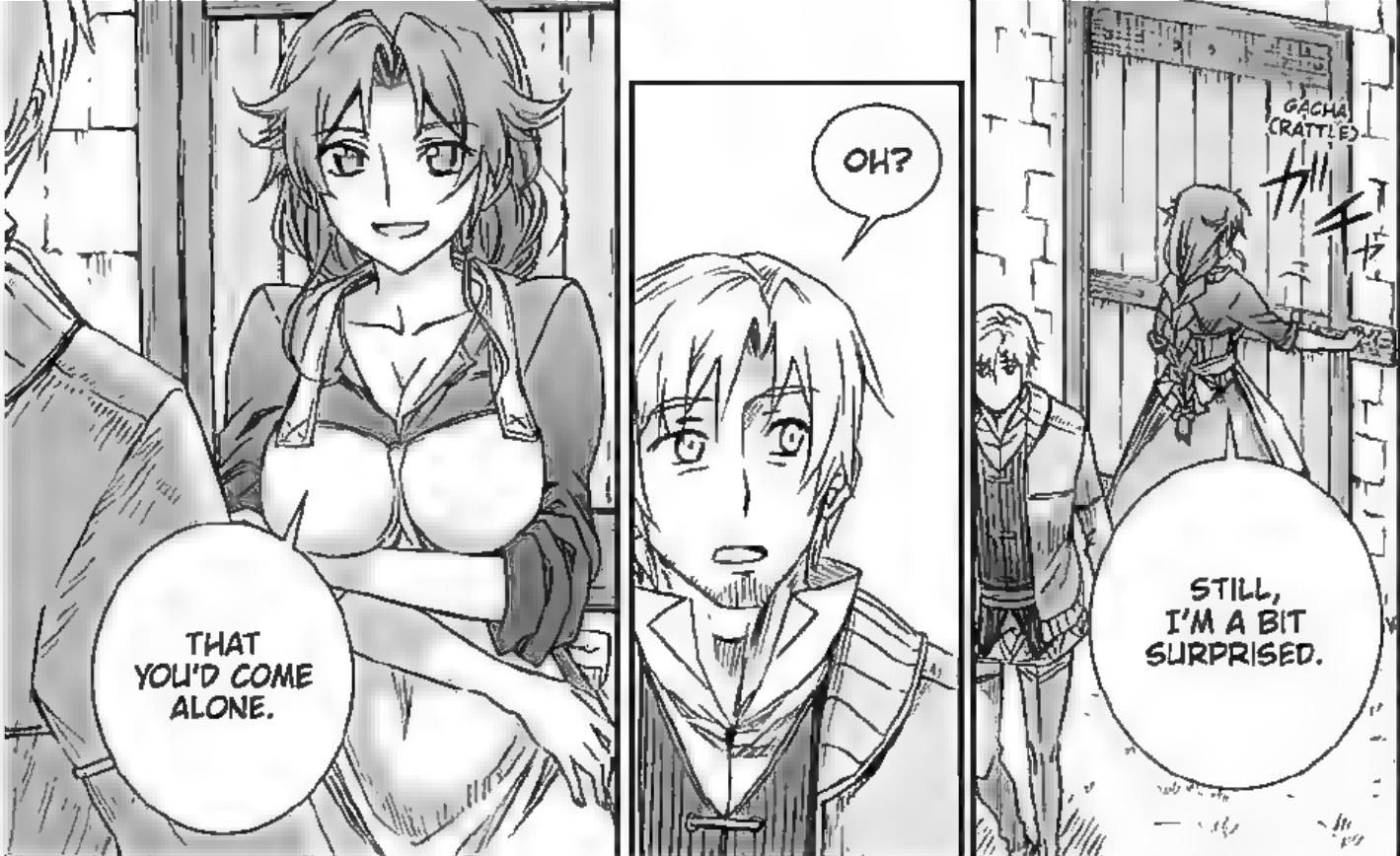
SEE
AND NOW, EVEN A DULL COPPER IS STARTING TO LOOK AS BRILLIANT AS GOLD.

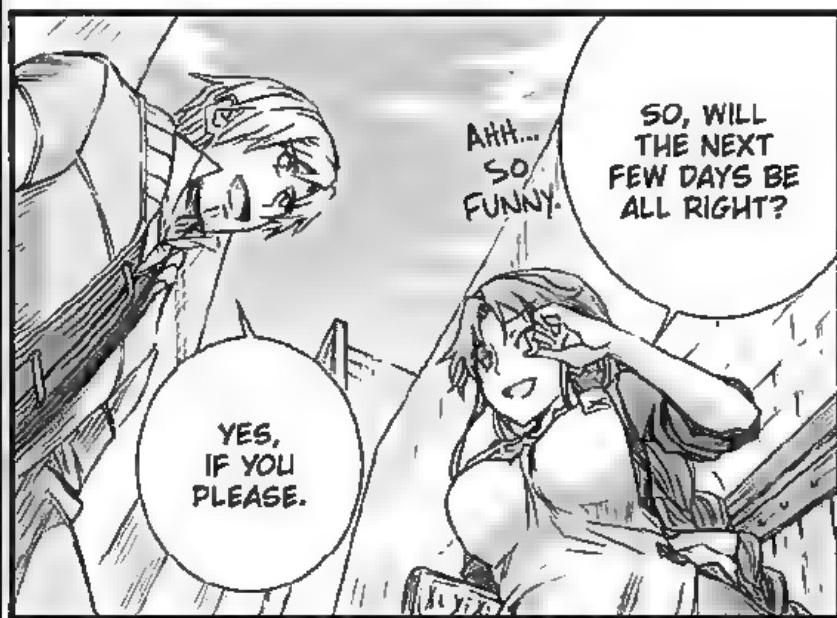
AND SO PEOPLE SPECULATE BY BUYING UP GOODS WHILE THE PRICE IS HIGH.

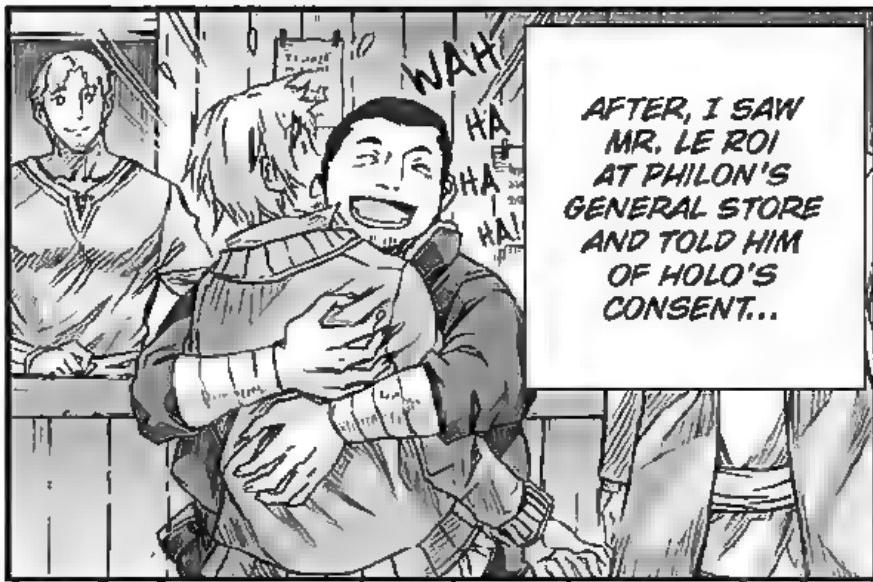
BUT BECAUSE COIN SHORTAGE IS A PROBLEM FOR ANY TOWN, IT'S NOT AS THOUGH WE CAN IMPORT SOME COPPERS.

THERE'S TOO MUCH CASH IN THE HANDS OF THE FUR DEALERS.









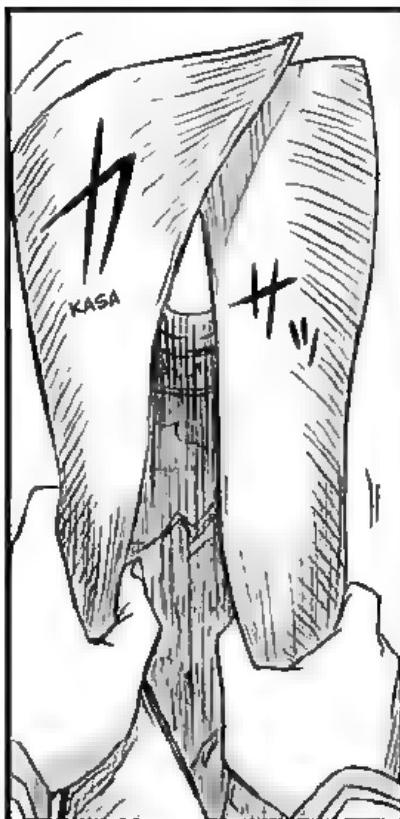












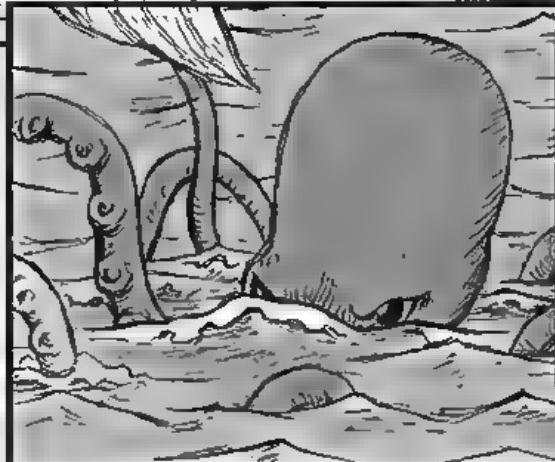
THE MAP DRAWN BY FORMER MERCENARY CHAPLAIN, CURRENT SILVERSMITH FRAN VONLY WAS A MAGNIFICENT THING.

AS WAS CUSTOMARY ON MAPS, THE FOUR CORNERS HAD BEEN DECORATED WITH DRAWINGS OF GODS OR SPIRITS.



SILVER MOUNTAIN

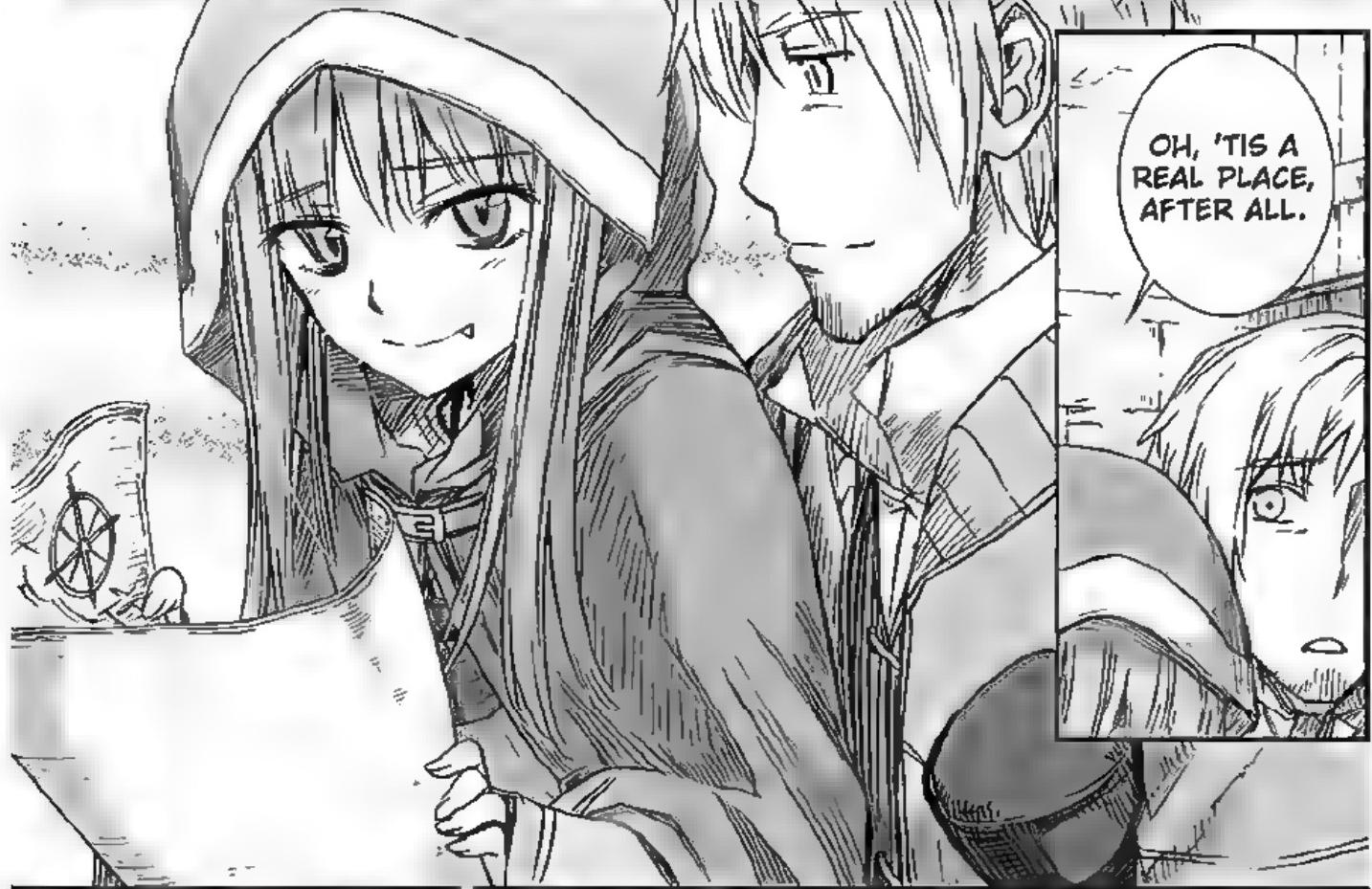
THERE, IN THE TOLKIEN REGION, THE HOWLING WOLF SEEMED TO BE ANNOUNCING THE NAME WRITTEN JUST UNDER ITS PAWS —



PERHAPS FRAN WAS DRAWING ON LEGENDS AND STORIES SHE HERSELF HAD COLLECTED.



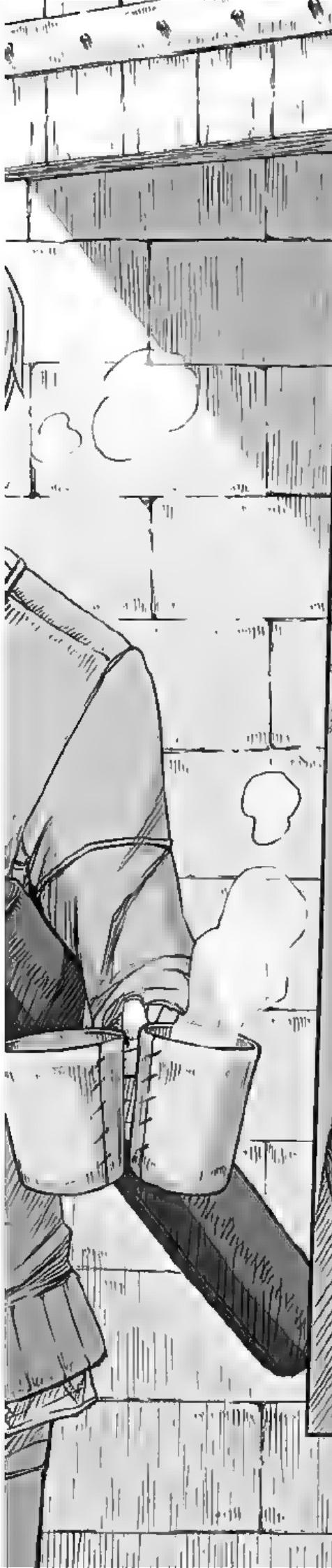
HOLO'S EYES WERE DRAWN IN BY THE IMAGE OF A WOLF IN THE DEEP FORESTS OF MT. ROEF.





IF A
GOD ONCE
WORSHIPPED
BY HUMANS
SAYS IT, IT'S
CERTAINLY
CAPTURED A
SORT OF
TRUTH.

COME,
YOU.

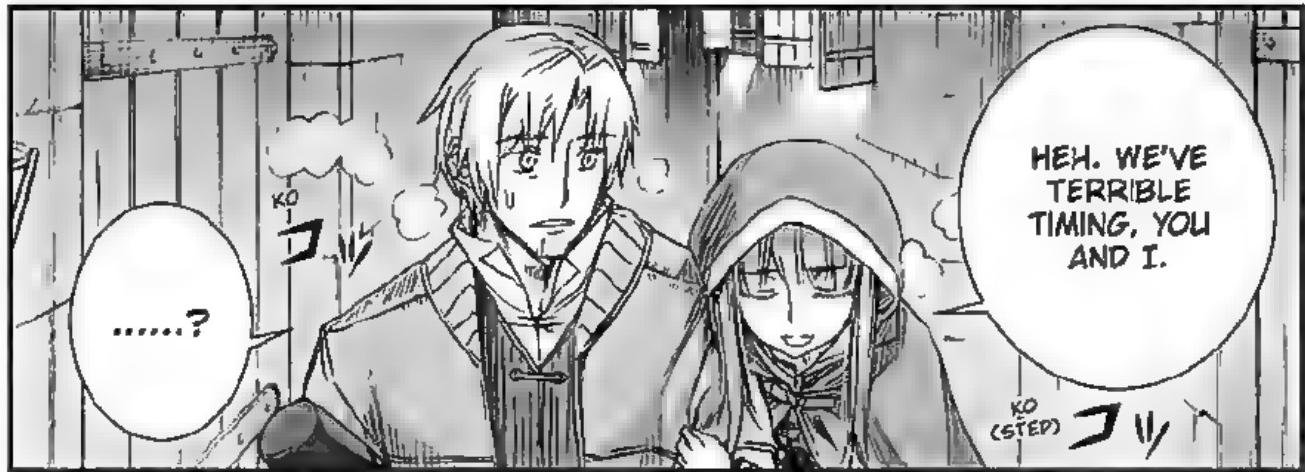




THANK
YOU.









...THREE OF US.



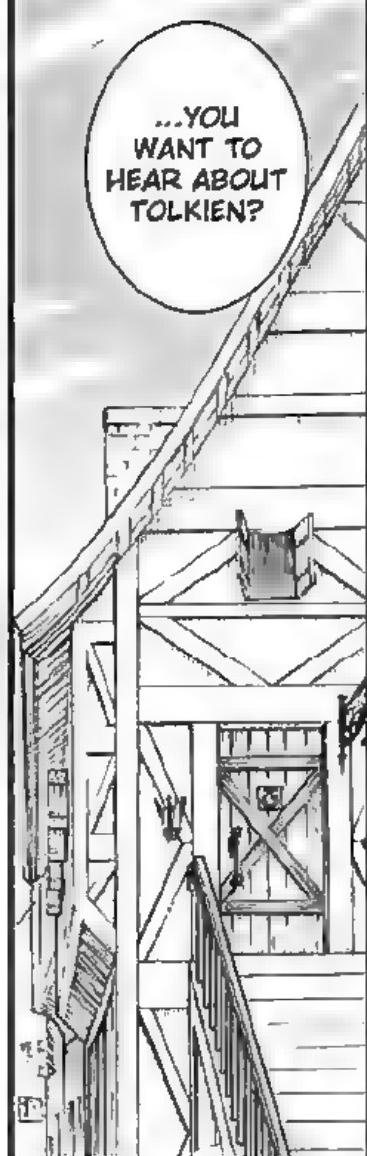
THERE IS NO DEEP REASON FOR HIM TO BE TRAVELING WITH US.



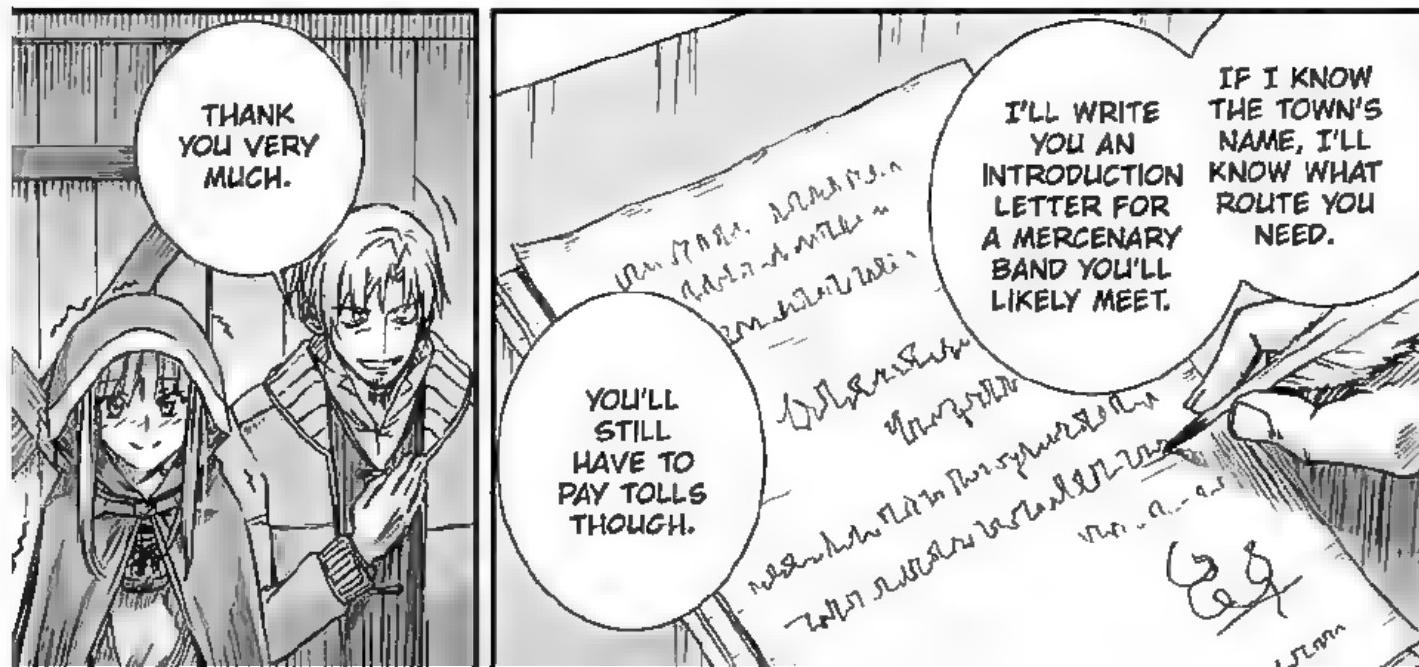


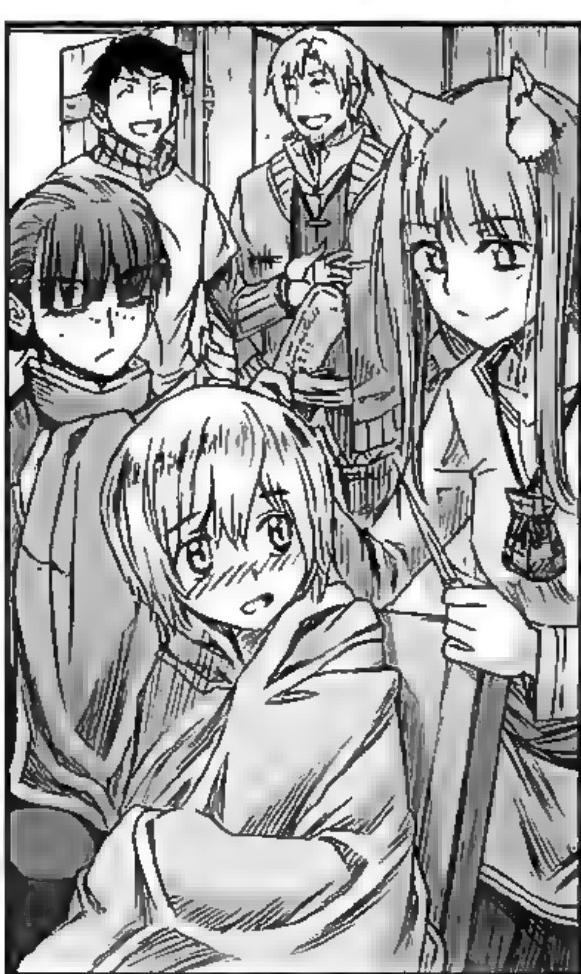
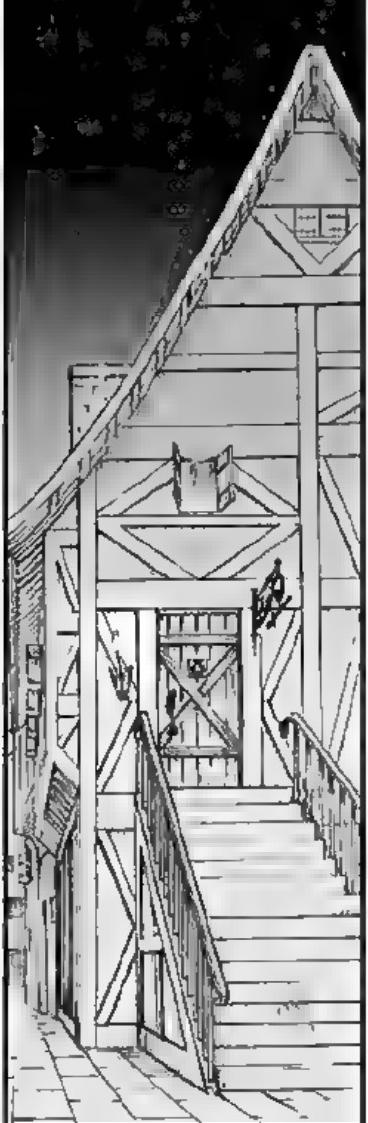


LE ROI AND
EVAN WERE
PROBABLY
RUNNING
AROUND THE
MARKET
PREPARING
FOR TRAVEL.







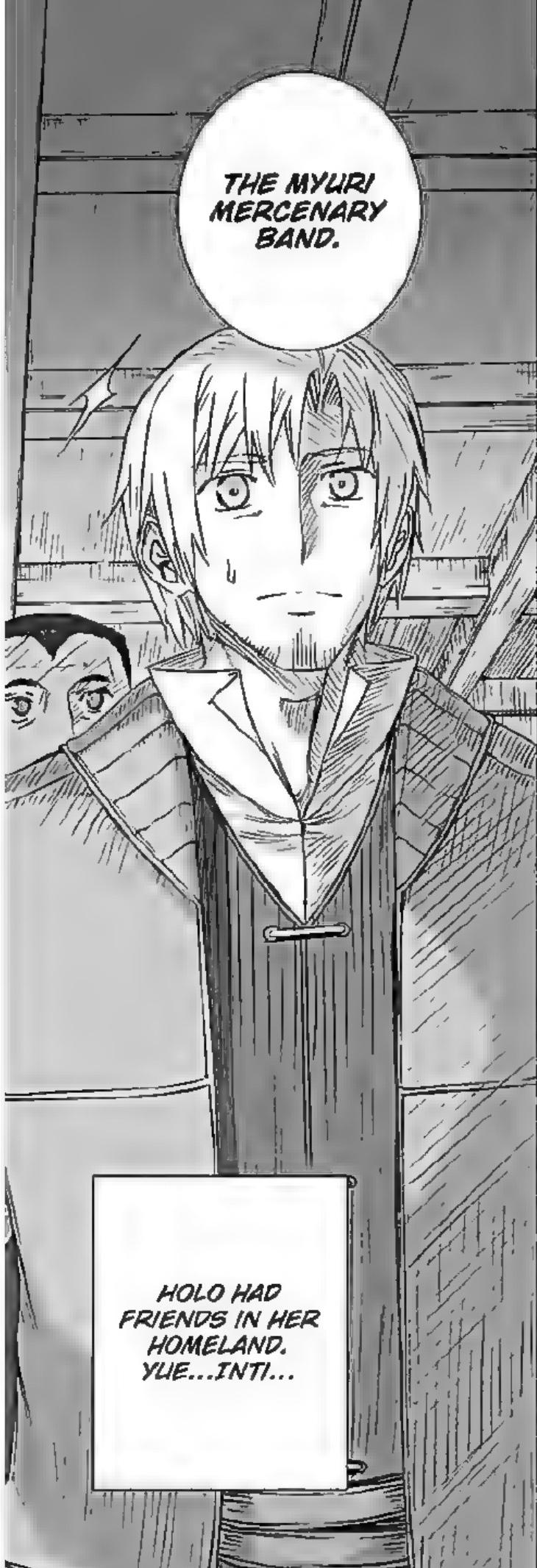






BUT I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE GOAL IS.





THE MYURI
MERCENARY
BAND.



A WOLF?



COME TO
THINK OF IT,
I THINK THE
MERCENARY
TROOP IN
QUESTION HAS
A WOLF ON ITS
STANDARD.

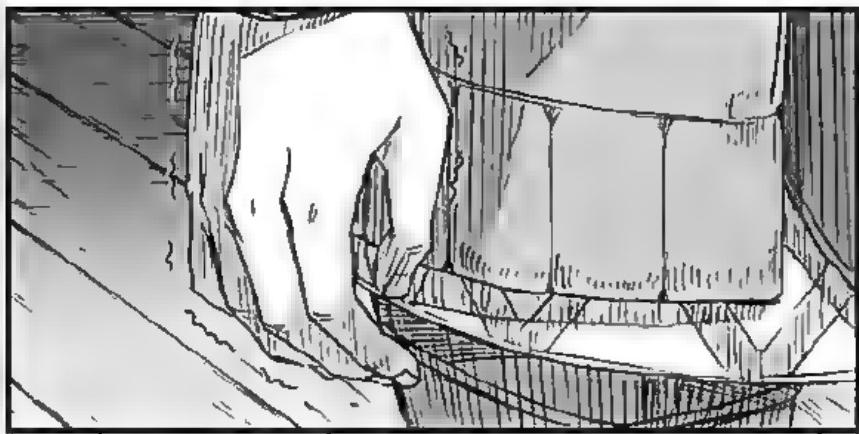


HOLO HAD
FRIENDS IN HER
HOMELAND.
YUE...INTI...

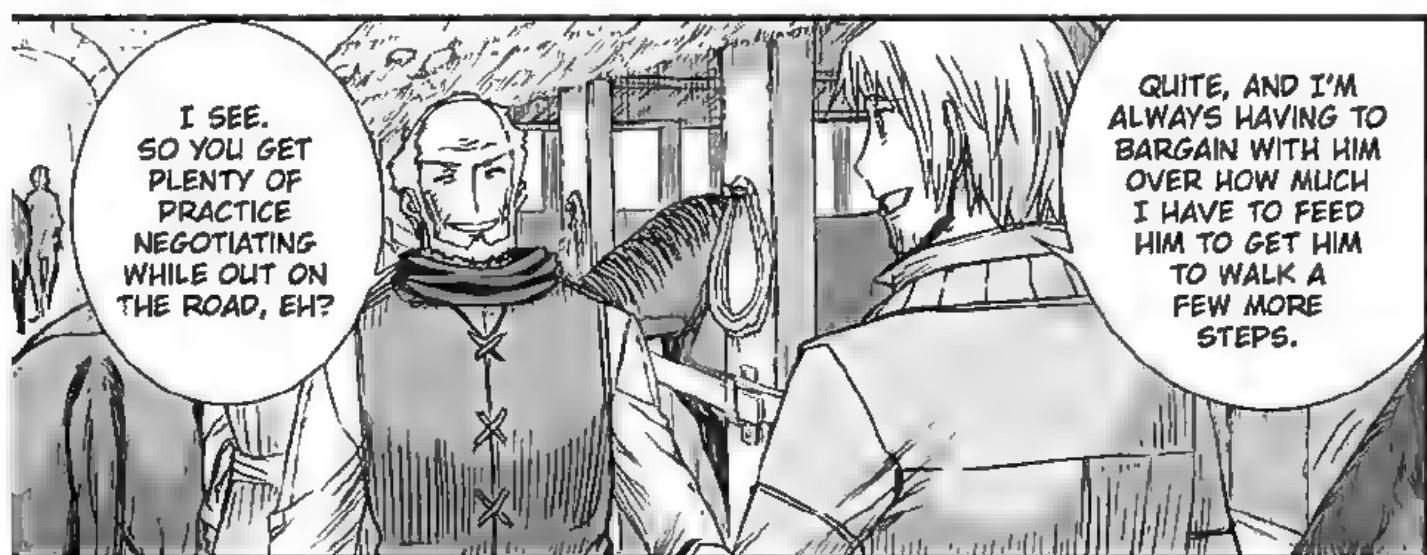
OH!

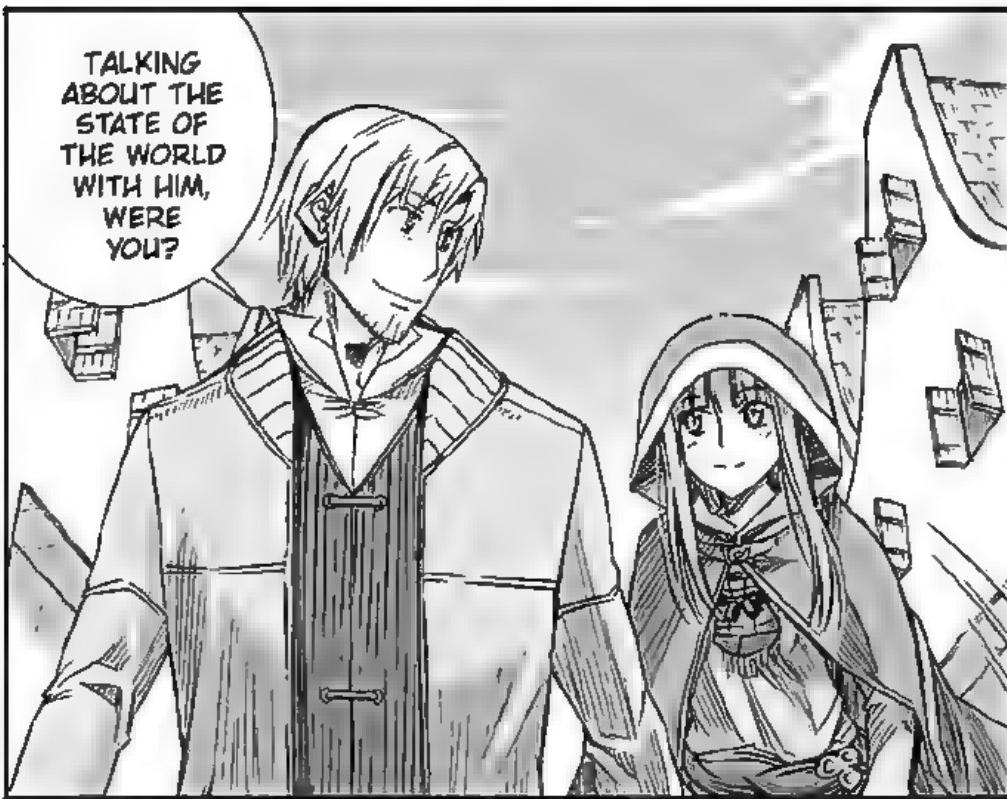
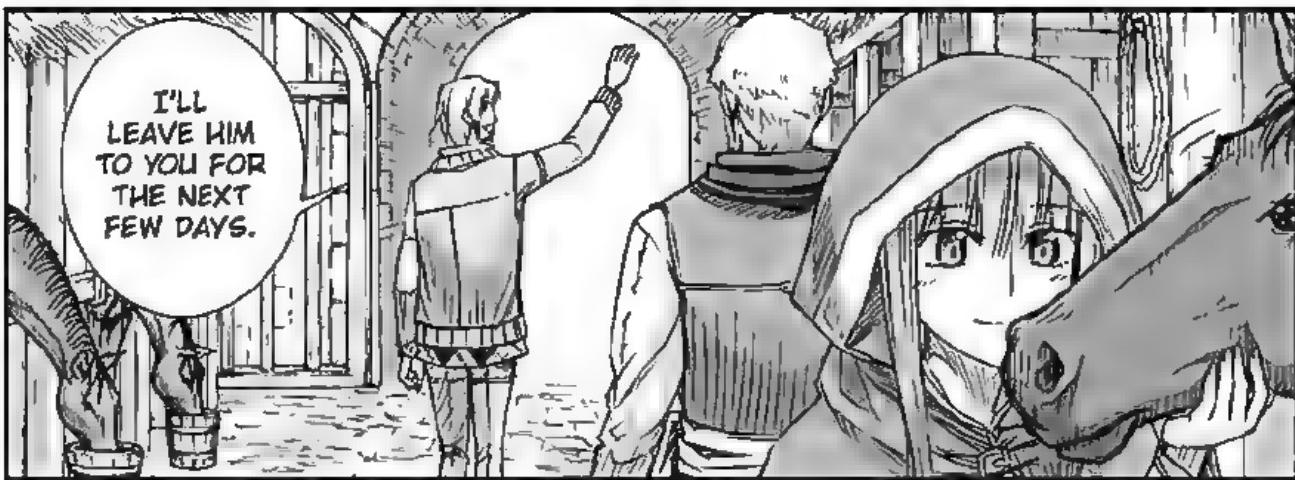
IT'S NOT A
BIG TROOP,
BUT IT'S
BEEN AROUND
FOR A LONG
TIME. WHAT
WAS IT...?

IT HAD
A RATHER
STRANGE
NAME.

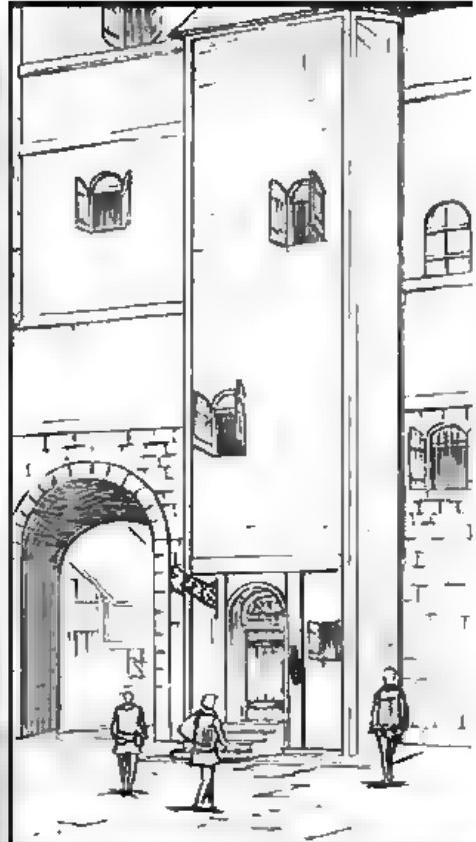
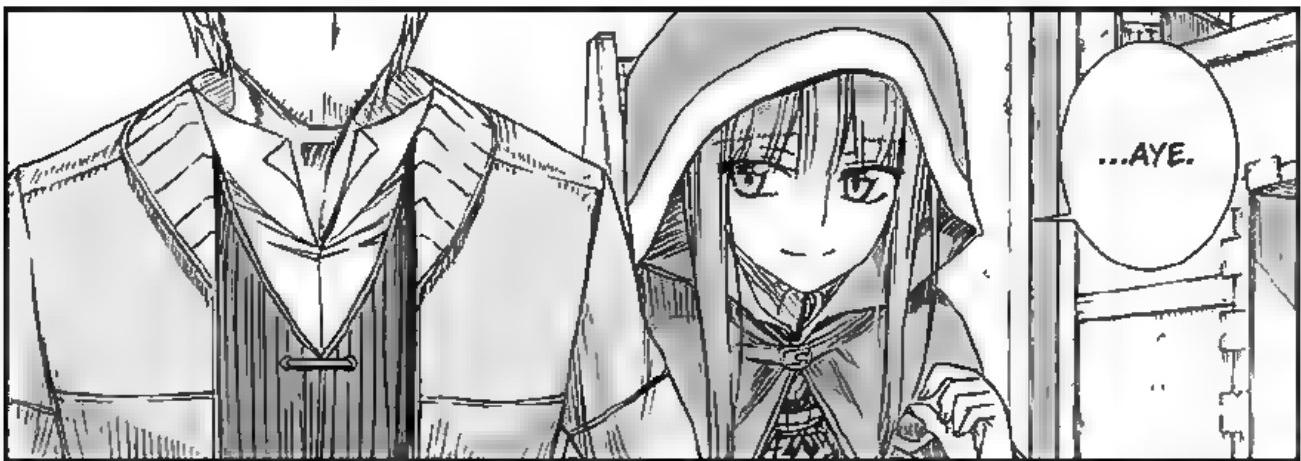


SPICE & WOLF









"HOWEVER, ONLY
ON CONDITION
LAWRENCE
ACCOMPANIES
LE ROI UNTIL
THE PURCHASE
AND SALE ARE
COMPLETE."

THE NOTE
READ, "WE
LARGELY
CONCUR WITH
LENDING THE
CAPITAL."

IT WAS
THE REPLY
TO THE
MESSAGE
I SENT TO
KIEMAN
BY POST-
HORSE.

AND FURTHER,
THE LENDER
WILL VISIT
LENOS TO
SPEAK TO
LE ROI.

PRETTY
MUCH
JUST AS I
EXPECTED
...

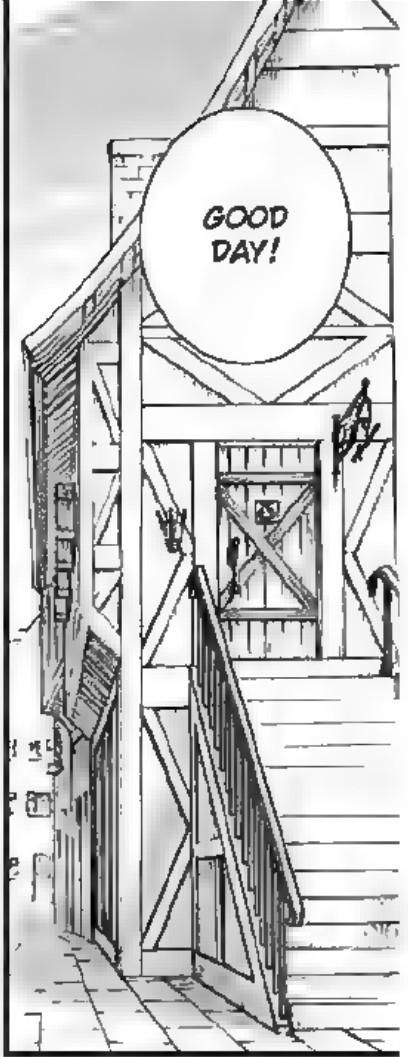
THE
ENVY
WILL
LIKELY
ARRIVE IN
NO TIME!

THERE'S
NO GOING
BACK NOW.

GATA
(CRATTLE)

HE'S
SENDING
A CLOSE
ASSOCIATE?
THAT'S
NATURAL.

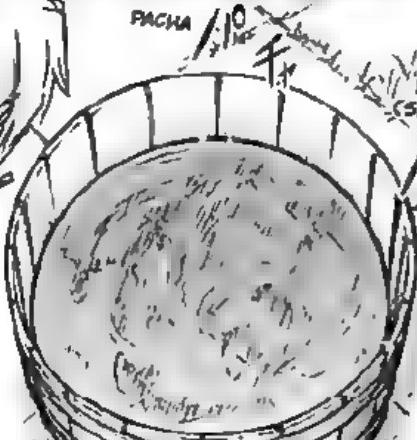
PROB-
ABLY
NOT
HIM!!



BATAN
COPENG

WHETHER I
SHOULD TELL
HOLO ABOUT
MYLURI IS A HARD
QUESTION.
MAYBE I
SHOULD POSE
IT TO GOD?

COME,
WE'VE
BROUGHT
GIFTS!



PACHA
SPLASH

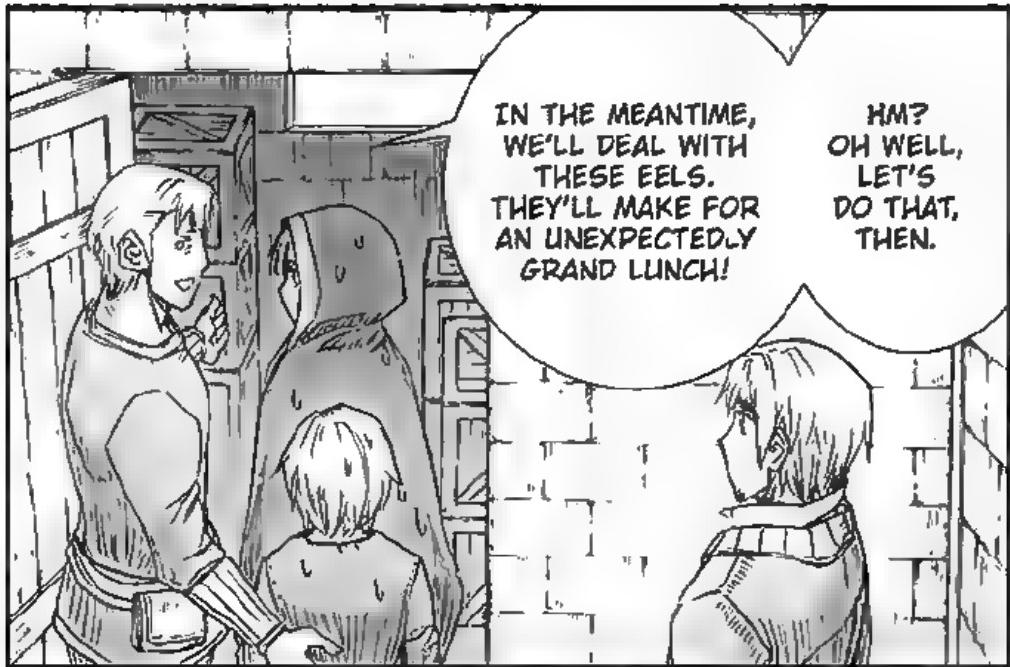
HFF!

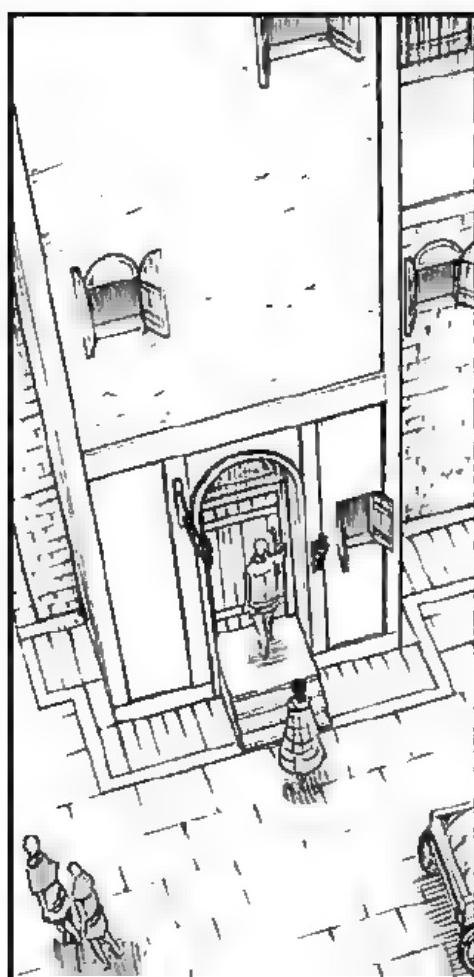
HFF!

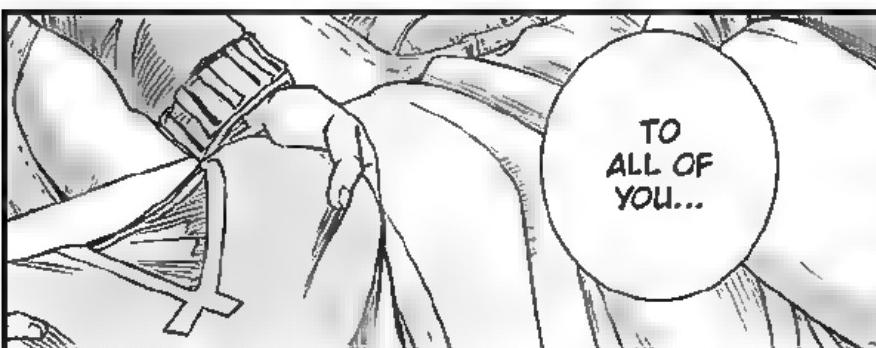
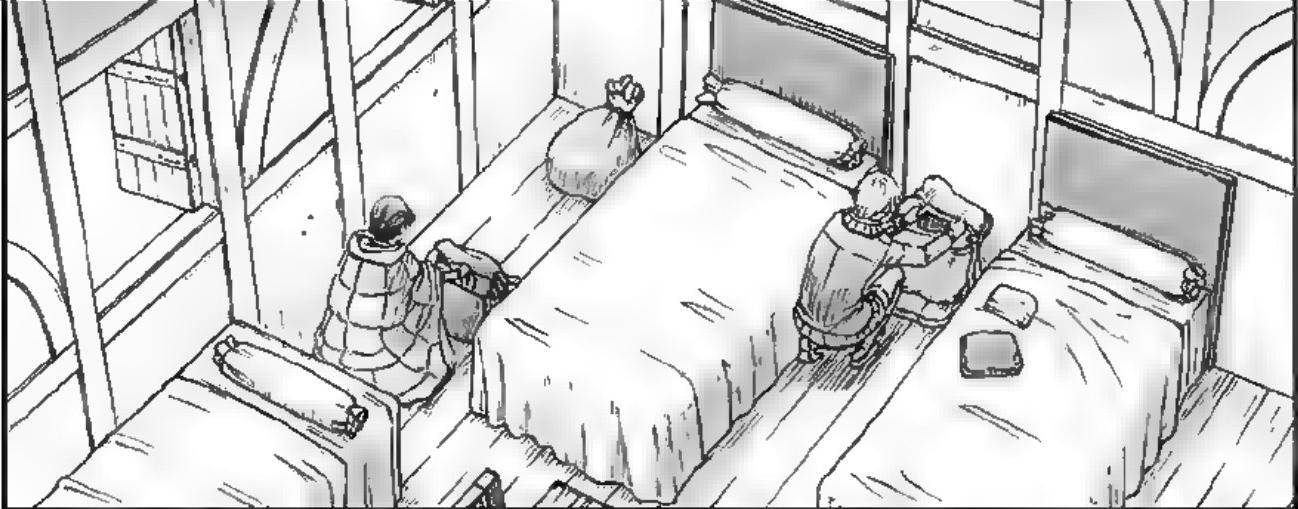
HFF!























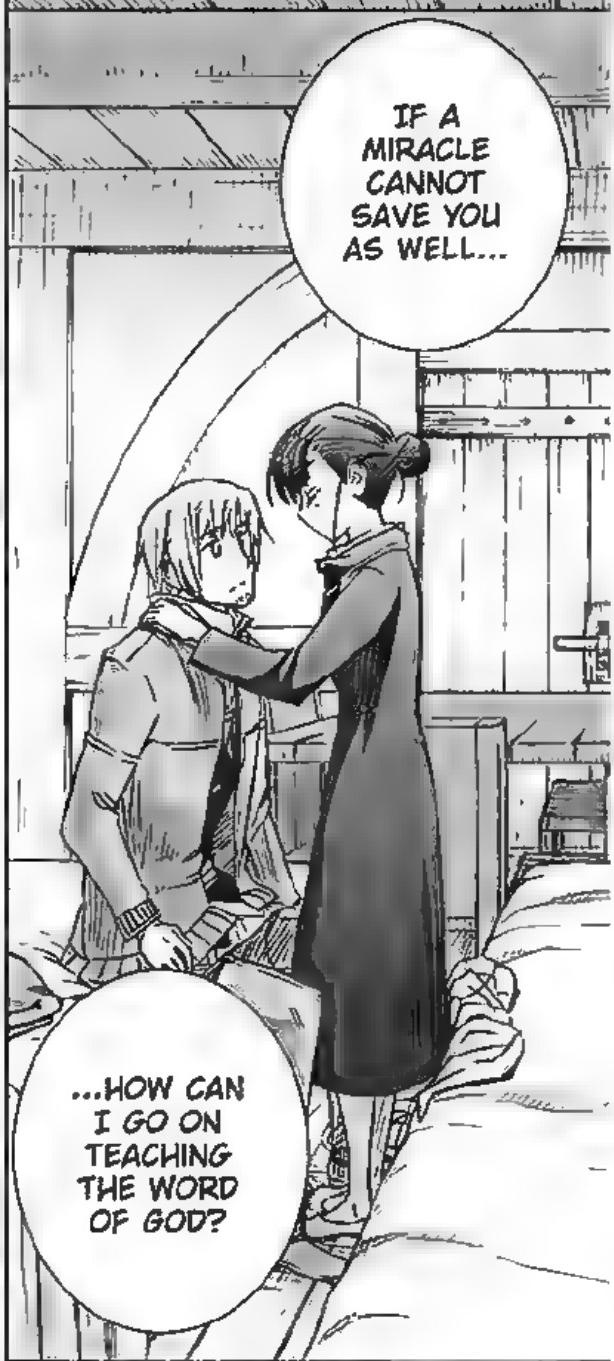


YOU AND SHE
CAME TO OUR
VILLAGE AND
CREATED A
MIRACLE, WHICH
SAVED US ALL.

CAN THERE
NOT BE A
MIRACLE?

CAN YOU
NOT...

SYR (SQUEEZE)





MYLIRI, YOU SEE, IS THE NAME OF SOMEONE MY COMPANION SEPARATED FROM, CENTURIES AGO IN HER HOMELAND, WHOM SHE THOUGHT DEAD.



SHE
DOESN'T
KNOW YET.
I TOLD
PHILON
NOT TO
TELL HER.

HE'S
PROBABLY
ALIVE
THOUGH.



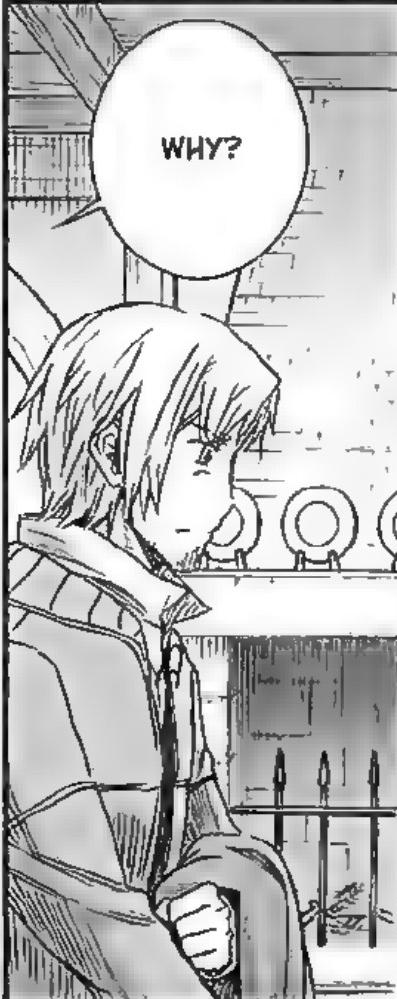
GACHA CRATTLE

...WE'VE
GOTTEN
THIS FAR, I
MAY AS WELL
CONFESS IT.

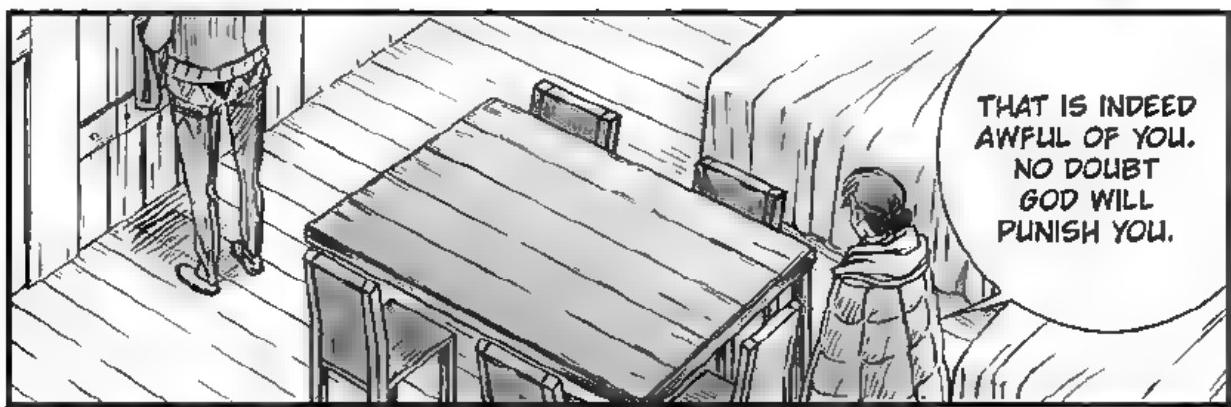


A MERCENARY
BAND WOULD
NEVER NAME
THEMSELVES
AFTER A WOMAN,
AFTER ALL. IT'S
RIDICULOUS, BUT
I'M JEALOUS.

I WANT
HER TO
CONCENTRATE
ON THE
JOURNEY
WITH ME
UNTIL
THEN.



WHY?



IT'S NONE
OF YOUR
BUSINESS.

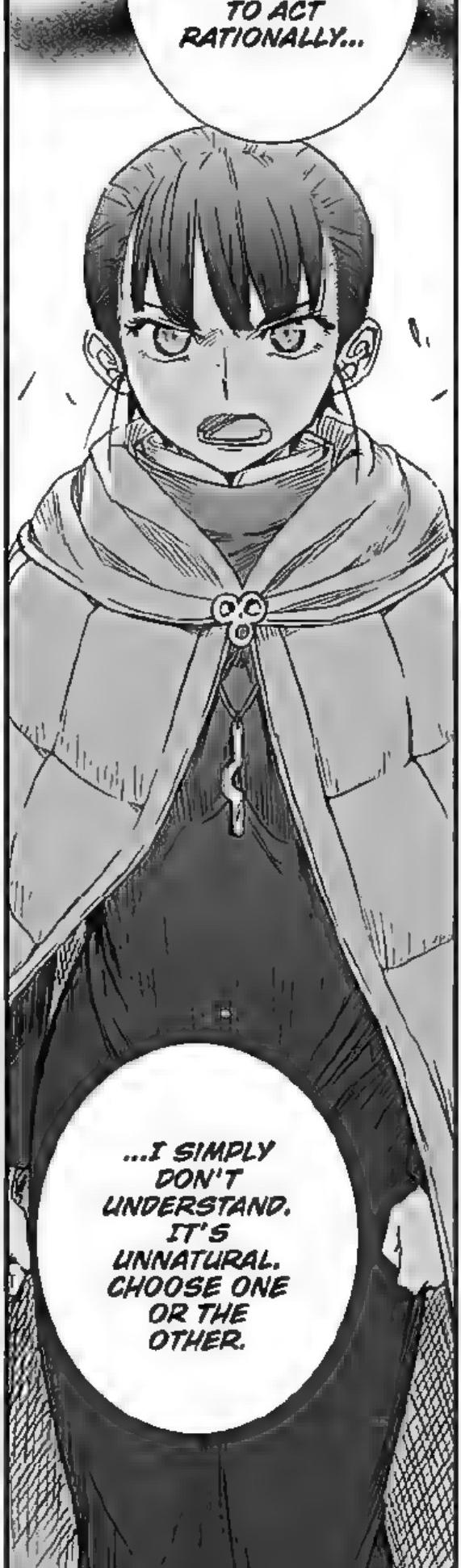
FEELING
THE WAY
YOU DO,
YET TRYING
TO ACT
RATIONALLY...



NOT
EVEN AS
A TEACHER
OF GOD'S
WORD.

THIS IS OUR
PROBLEM AND
OUR DECISION.
IT'S NOT YOUR
PLACE TO
SAY WHAT WE
SHOULD DO.

...I SIMPLY
DON'T
UNDERSTAND.
IT'S
UNNATURAL.
CHOOSE ONE
OR THE
OTHER.



YOU'RE
QUITE
RIGHT.

BUT I
WANTED
TO REPAY
MY DEBT
TO BOTH
OF YOU.

IT DOESN'T
SEEM TO ME THAT
EITHER OF YOU
ARE ACTING IN
YOUR OWN BEST
INTERESTS...

...SO I
WANTED
TO AT
LEAST...

BUT
SHE IS,
I ASSURE
YOU.

...ME,
NO.

VIA
COLLADE





THEN MY
QUESTION
STILL
STANDS.
WHY WON'T
YOU TURN
AND FIGHT
BACK?

YOUR
INDECISION IS
SO INFURIATING
I CAN HARDLY
STAND IT!

IT'S LIKE
THERE ARE
TWO EVANS.





YOU MERCHANTS
USE ALL SORTS
OF UNBELIEVABLE
TECHNIQUES,
DON'T YOU?



YOU HAVE MEANS
AVAILABLE TO YOU
THAT CAN ONLY BE
CALLED MAGIC,
DON'T YOU?



...IF YOU'RE
HESITATING
TO USE SUCH
METHODS,
THEN BE AT
EASE.

OR IF...



IF YOU SAY
YOU'VE TURNED
AWAY FROM GOD
AND DESERVE
NO MIRACLES...

SO
THINK!



...THEN STOP
PRAYING AND
THINK LIKE A
MERCHANT!

I WILL DO ALL I CAN TO ASSURE THEIR CORRECTNESS IN THE FACE OF GOD'S TEACHINGS.

THEY'D PROBABLY HAND ELSA A GLASS OF WINE AND TELL HER TO CALM DOWN.

IF A HUNDRED MERCHANTS HEARD THE STORY, THEY, PLUS TWENTY FRIENDS, WOULD ALL AGREE THAT HOLO'S WAY WAS THE RIGHT ONE.

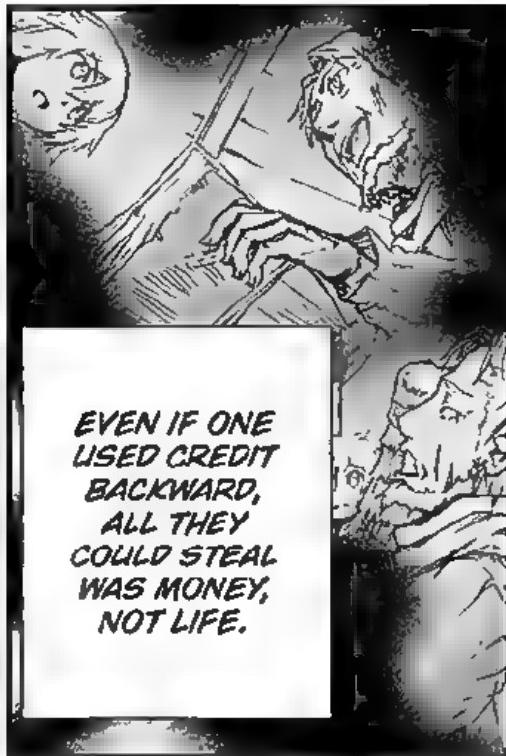
EVEN MONEY ORDERS, MYSTERIOUS DOCUMENTS LETTING YOU MOVE MONEY WITHOUT CARRYING HEAVY COIN ON YOUR BACK, WERE NO MYSTERY ONCE EXPLAINED.

TO BEGIN WITH, MERCHANTS DID NOT POSSESS ANY SUCH MAGICAL ABILITIES.

DEALS WITH MONEY ORDERS
THEY WERE SIMPLY A WAY OF MOVING GOODS DOWN THE INVISIBLE CANAL CALLED CREDIT.

MAKE DEAL WITH NUMBERS IN AN ACCOUNT INSTEAD OF COIN

SELL COMMODITIES TO COVER DIFFERENCE IN CASH OR CARRY TO NEXT DEAL

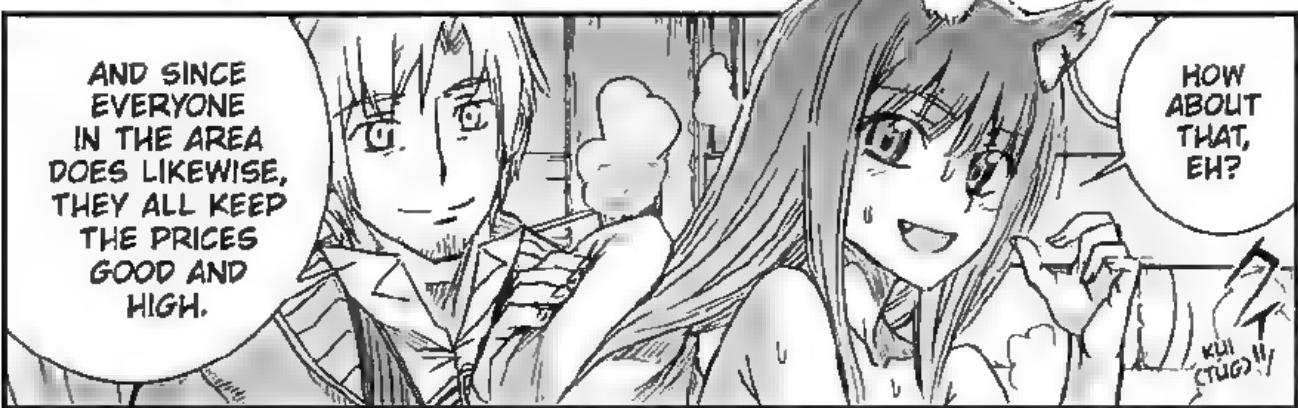












THERE'S A
MERCENARY
BAND...
NEAR
YOITSU.

AND WHAT
SHALL I DO
ONCE I'M
CHANGED?



THEY CALL
THEMSELVES...
THE MYURI
MERCENARIES.

WH—!?



*DO
YOU...*



I'M A
MERCHANT.



BUT
I'M GOING
TO PROPOSE
A CHANGE
IN PLANS,
SO FAR AS
CIRCUMSTANCES
ALLOW.

...MEAN TO
SAY THAT
YOU'RE NOT
GOING WITH
DUMPLING
HEAD...!?



**I WOULD
NEVER BREAK
A CONTRACT
SO EASILY.**

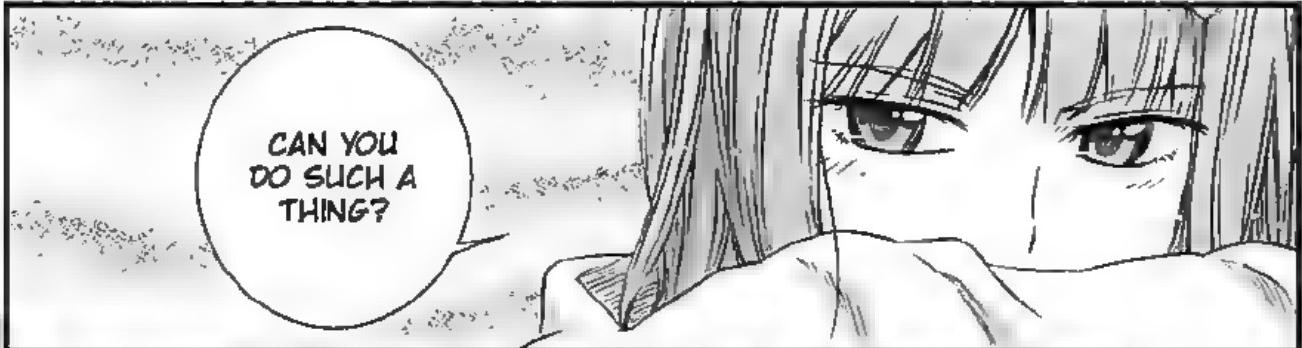




I OUGHT TO BE ABLE
TO SAVE COL AND MISS
ELSA THE TROUBLE OF
GOING TO YOITSU
AS WELL.

MAKE IT
SO I DON'T
HAVE TO GO
WITH LE ROI.

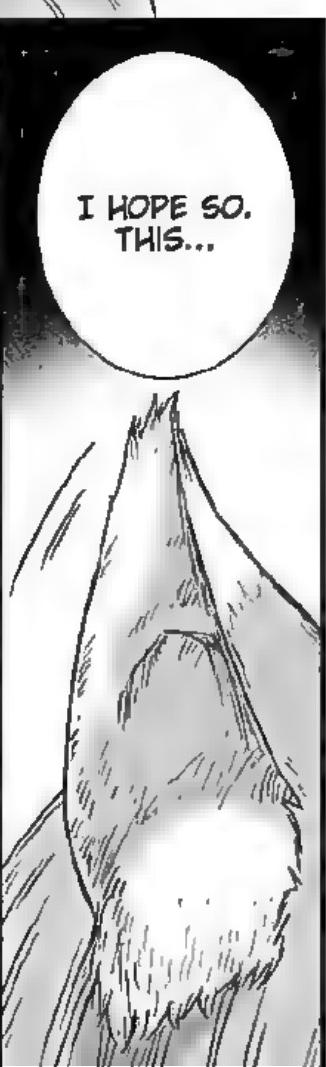
BA
(FLAP)



CAN YOU
DO SUCH A
THING?

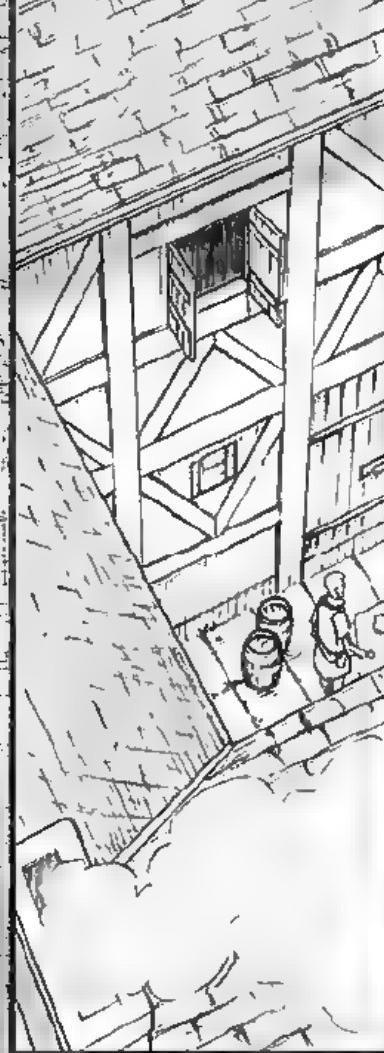


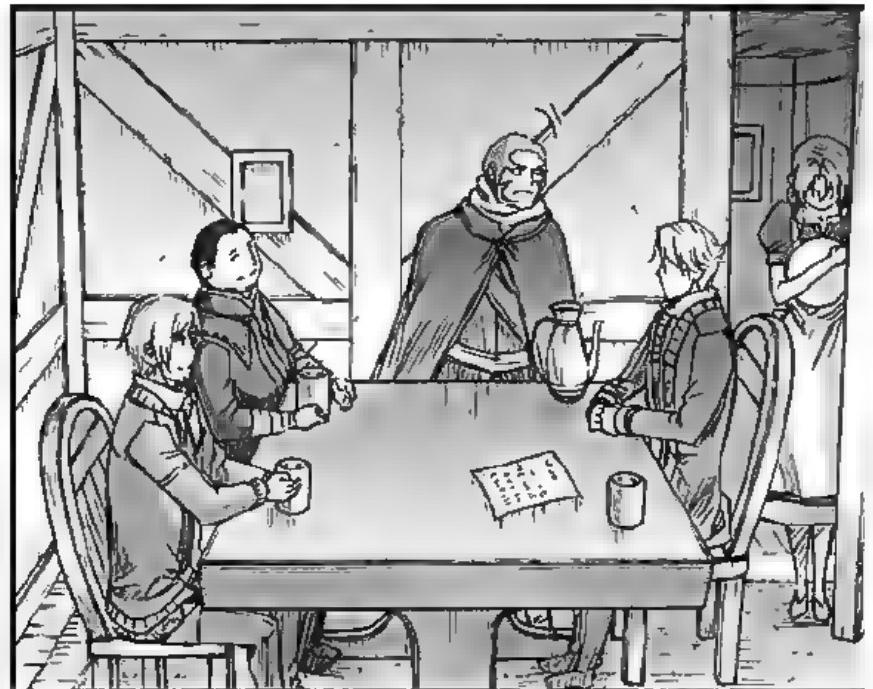
...IS
THE ONLY
WAY I CAN
TURN AND FIGHT—
AS A
MERCHANT.



I HOPE SO.
THIS...



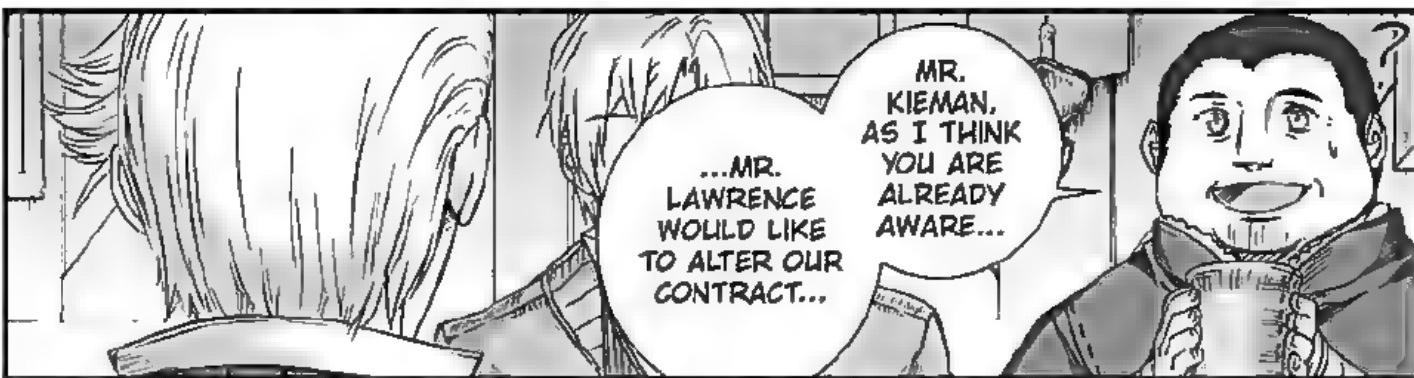






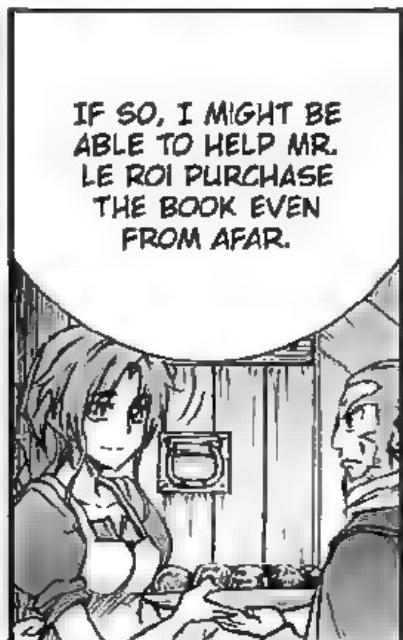


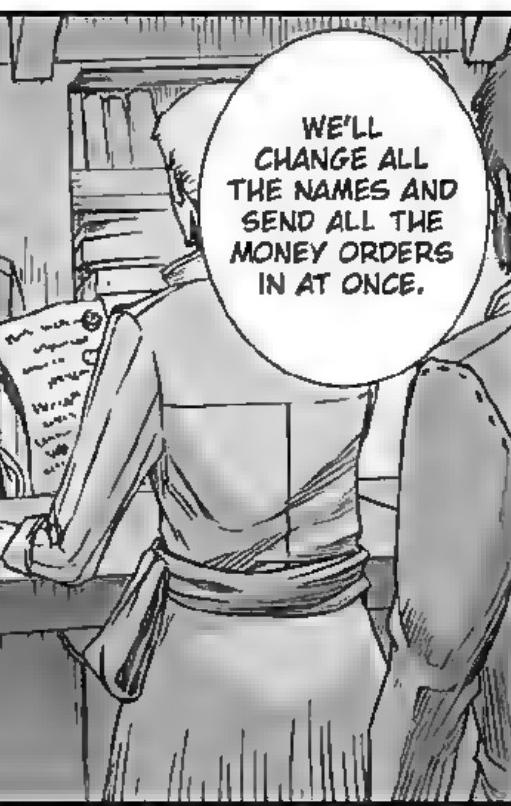
...EVER SINCE THE RECENT INCIDENT, I THOUGHT I'D STRETCH MY LEGS BEYOND KERUBE.



MR. KIEMAN, AS I THINK YOU ARE ALREADY AWARE...







AND IN THE MIDST OF ALL THIS, CUSTOMERS AND TRADING PARTNERS KEEP COMING.

THE MONEY WILL BE GONE FROM THEIR COPPERS, AND THE MONEY CHANGERS WILL CATCH WIND OF THIS AND HIKE UP THEIR EXCHANGE RATES.

...THEY'LL TURN SUSPICIOUS. BUT IT WILL ALREADY BE TOO LATE.

AS THEY START GETTING LOW ON COIN...

"BUY THIS, BUY THAT, PAY WHAT YOU SAID YOU'D PAY..." THE COMPANY WILL BE IN A MESS.

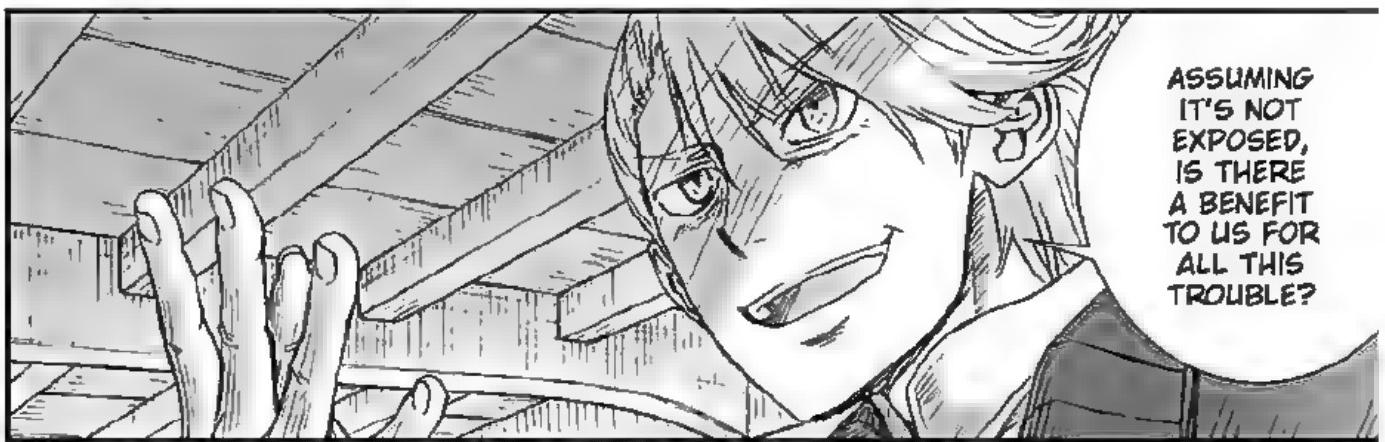
...INCLUDING ONES FROM THEIR REGULAR CUSTOMERS. WHICH ARE MALICIOUS? WHICH FROM PARTIES THEY CAN'T AFFORD TO ANGER?

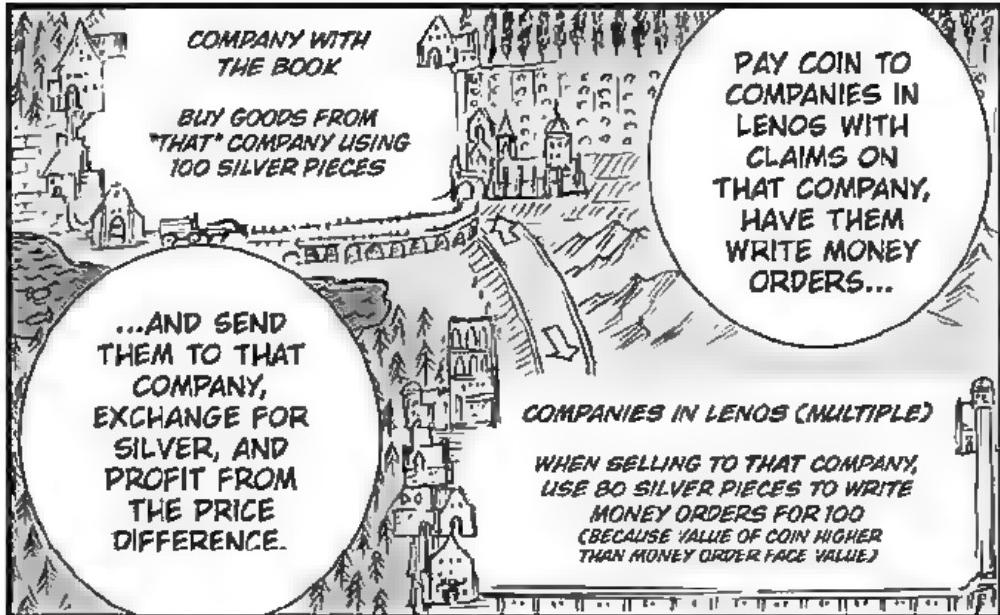
AND WHAT WILL THE COMPANY DO NEXT? THE MONEY ORDERS WILL KEEP COMING IN...

BUT THERE'S A CONDITION.

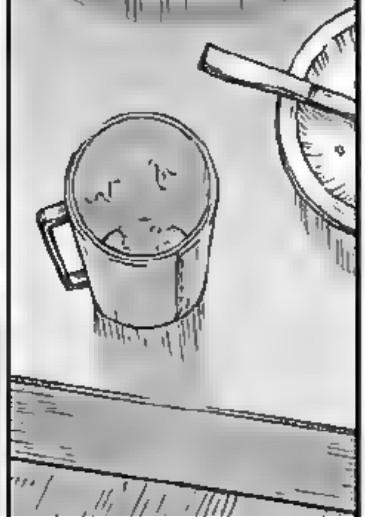
"YOU SEEM TO BE IN TROUBLE, SO I'LL TAKE THESE MONEY ORDERS OFF YOUR HANDS.

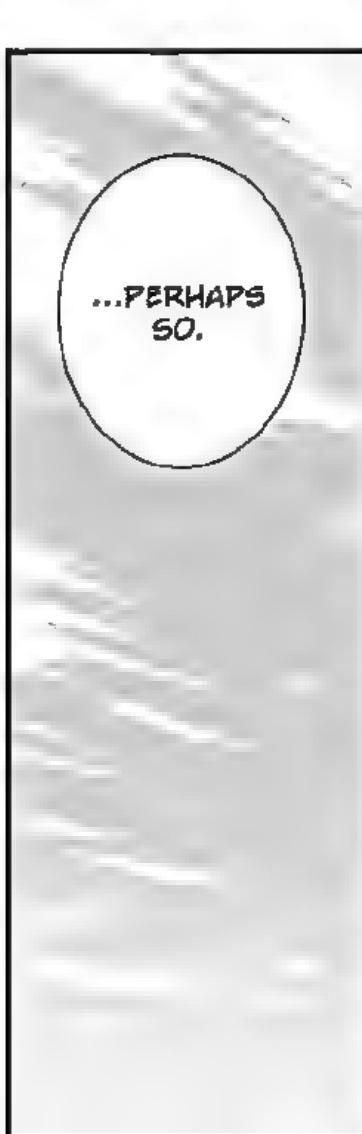
THAT'S WHERE MR. LE ROI SAYS...









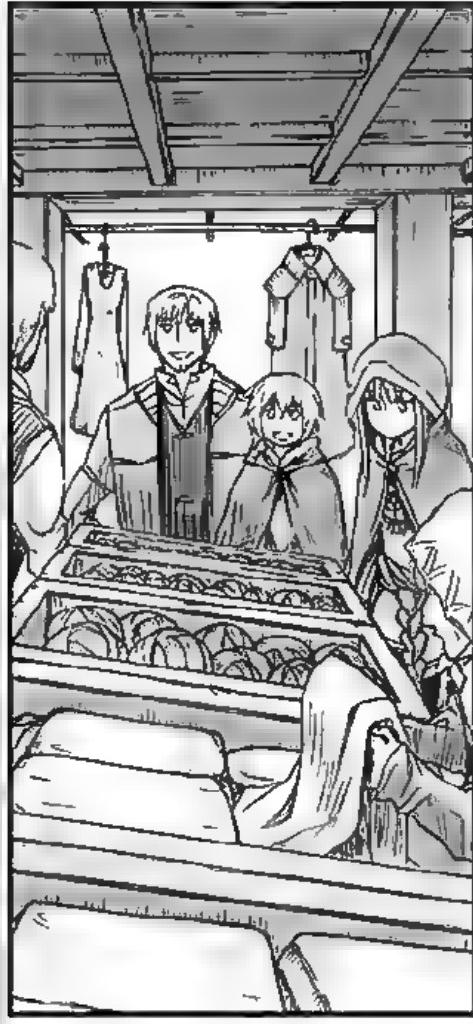


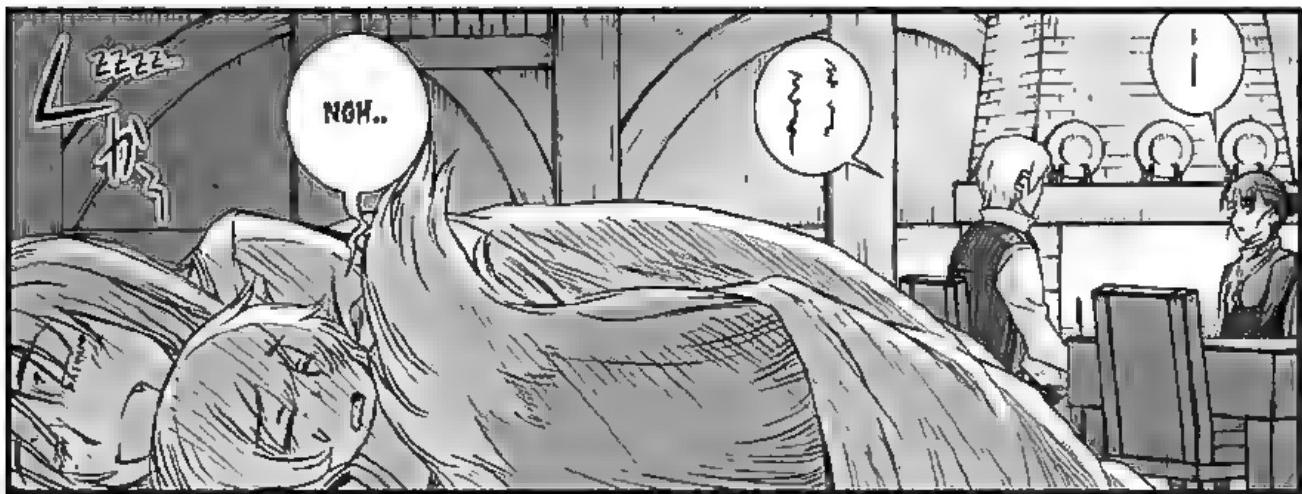


SPICE & WOLF

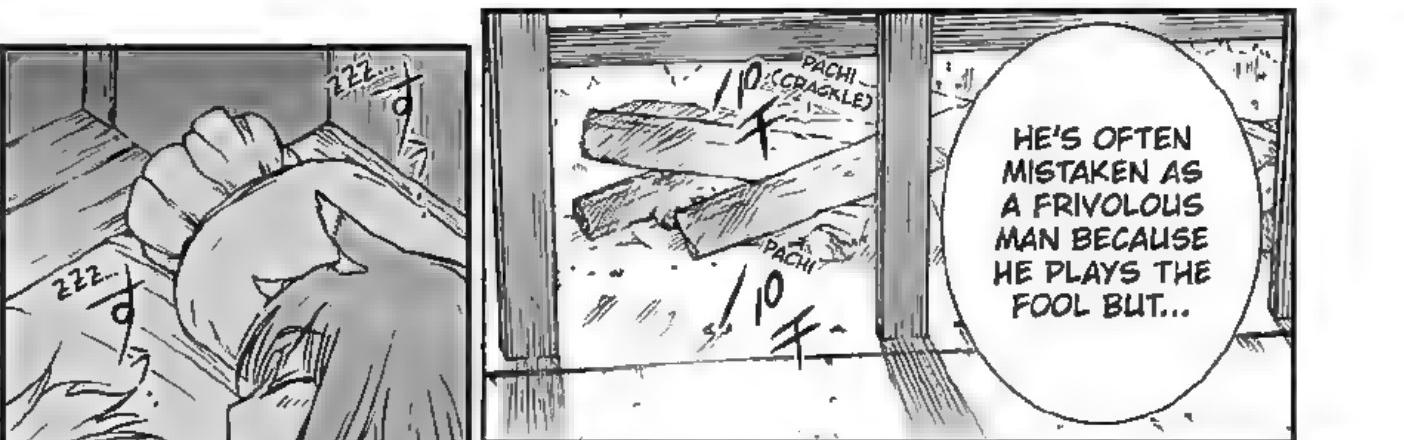
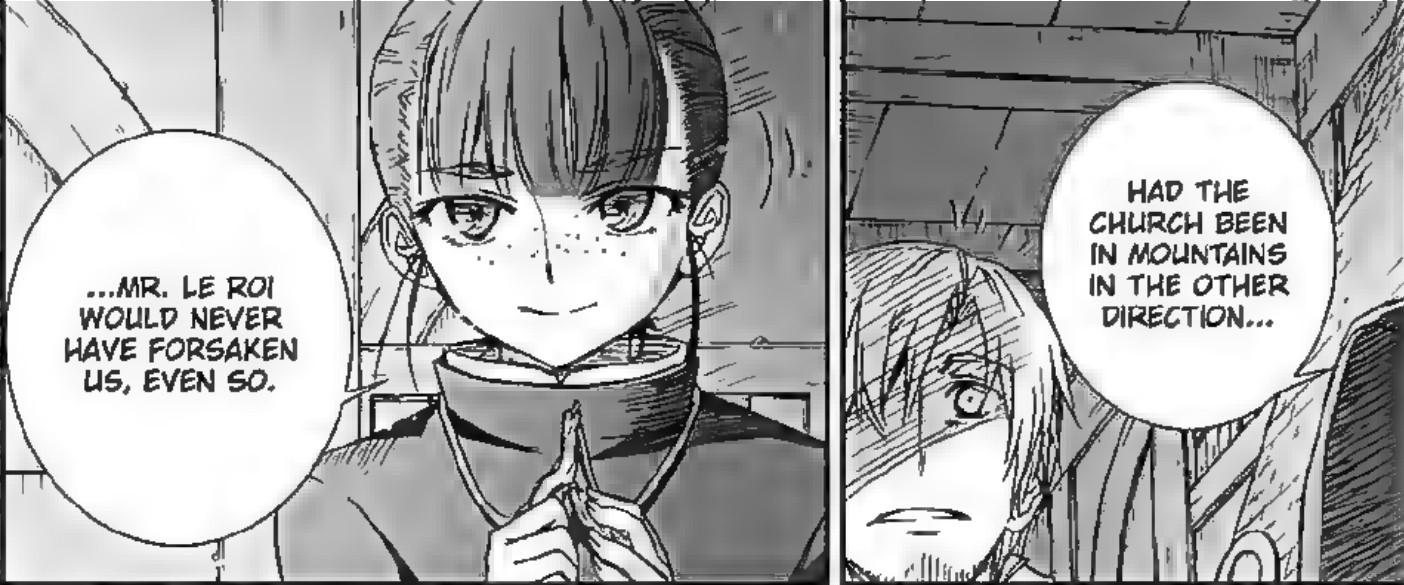


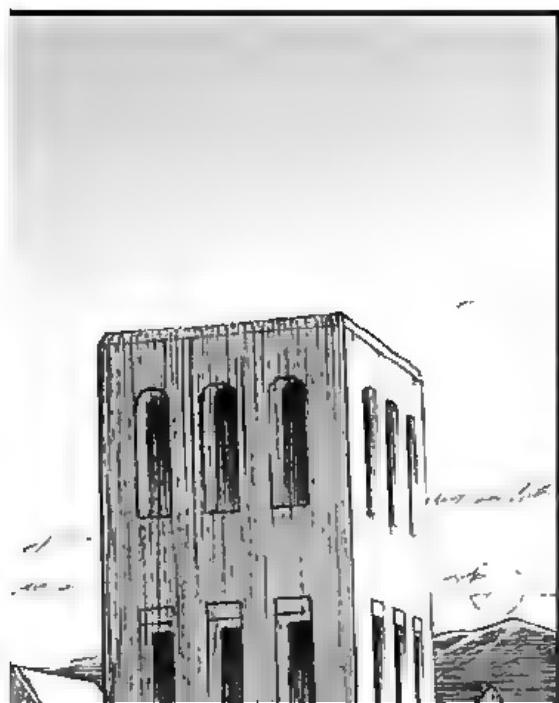












LIKE DRAWING THE ARROW OF A BOW, THERE WAS GREATER PERIL IN DRAWING IT OUT BIT BY BIT OUT OF FEAR.

THEY'RE NEW BOOTS, SO TAKE IT EASY ON THEM AT FIRST.

RIGHT.

FAREWELLS ARE TOO BRIEF.

IF THE DEAL GOES WELL, I'LL INFORM THE RONIN TRADE GUILD IMMEDIATELY.

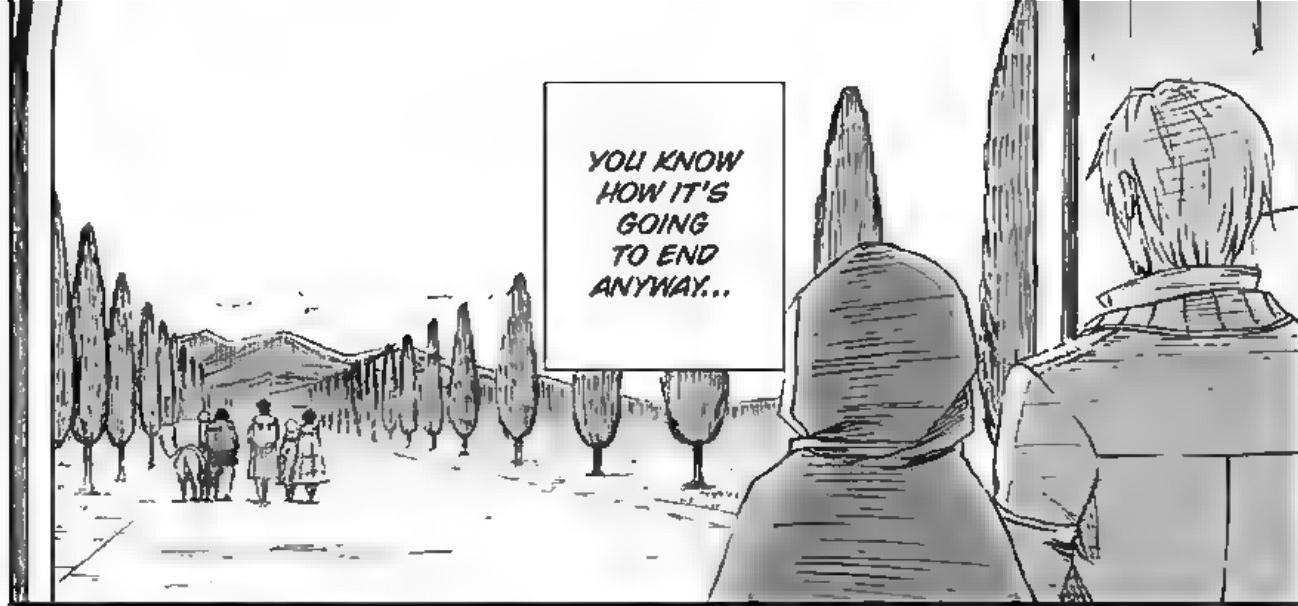
I AM AT FORTUNOUS NEWS.

NO MATTER HOW ANGLISHED THE MOMENT, THE ACT KNOWN AS "BIDDING FAREWELL" IS OVER IN BUT AN INSTANT.

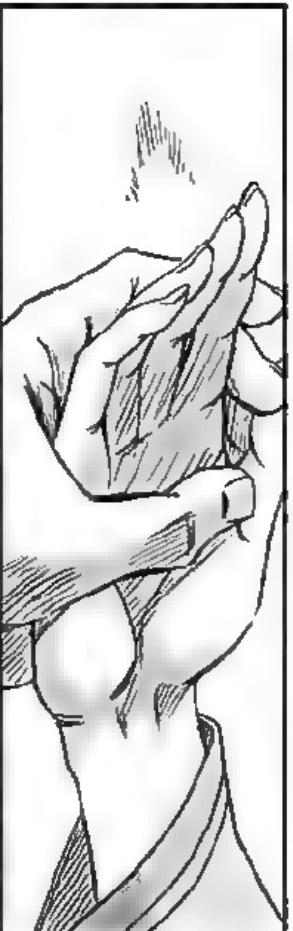
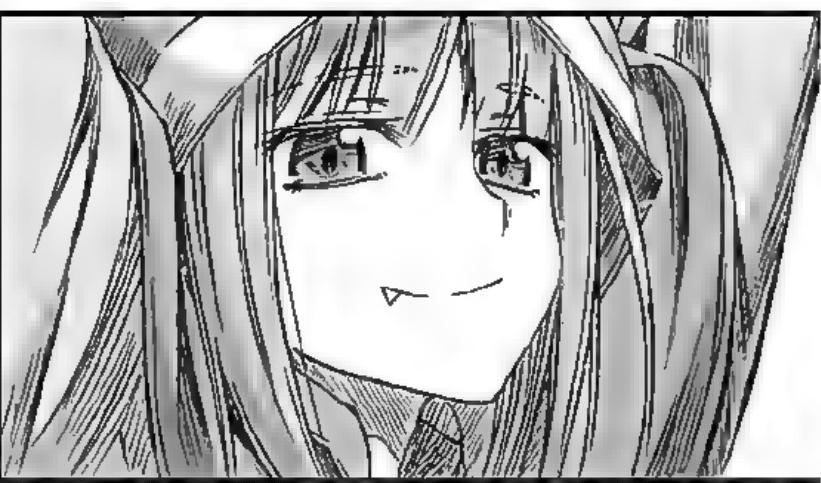
HOLD YOUR BREATH AND JUST PULL.

GOOD-BYE, MR. LAWRENCE!

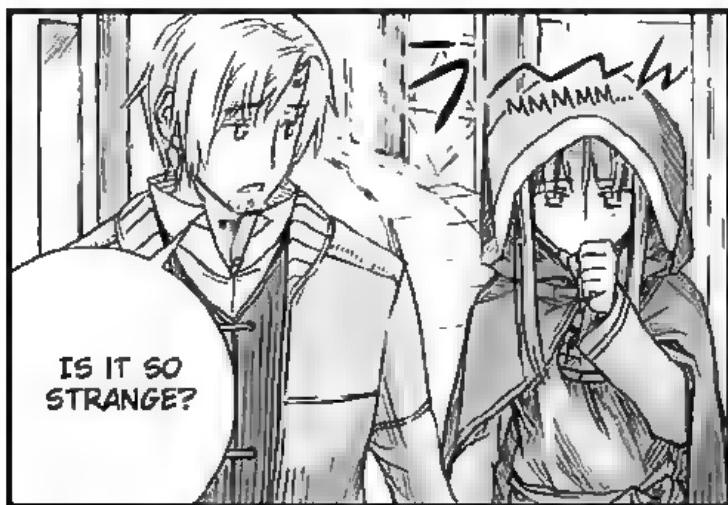


















To be continued in Volume 13...

Special Thanks!!

MR. OKAMOTO ITTOUHEI,
MR. TENTSU-TOI, MR. YAKKUN,
MR. N-TA, MR. ORIGUCHI

Afterword

Hi, Keito Koume here, in charge of the art for the manga version of Spice and Wolf. We finally reached scenes with Miss Elsa I'd always wanted to draw, and Lawrence and Holo part ways with Col, who's been with them since volume 8. Thanks to all the readers who've stuck with us this long. Also, thanks from the bottom of my heart to editor Mr. A, who joined us around the same time Col did.

From the next volume on, it's a rush to the final chapter. Now that Holo and Lawrence have confirmed their feelings, I hope you will enjoy where their travels take them from here!

SPICE & WOLF 12

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KEITO KOUUME
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LETTERING: LYS BLAKESLEE

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